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Anne - Boleyn.

MEMOIRS
OF
THE LIFE
OF
ANNE BOLEYN,
QUEEN OF HENRY VIII.

By MISS BENDER,
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SECOND EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

IN the records of biography there is perhaps no character that more forcibly exemplifies the vanity of human ambition than that of Anne Boleyn: elevated to a throne, devoted to a scaffold, she appears to have been invested with royalty only to offer an example of humiliating degradation, such as modern Europe had never witnessed. But, abstracted from those signal vicissitudes of fortune, which, in every age and country, must awaken curiosity and sympathy, there are various circumstances connected with the history of Anne Boleyn, which are calculated to create peculiar interest in the English reader. It would be ungrateful to forget that the mother of Queen Elizabeth was the early and zealous advocate of the Re-

formation, and that by her efforts to dispel
the gloom of ignorance and superstition,
she conferred on the English people a
benefit, of which, in the present advanced
state of knowledge and civilization, it
would be difficult to conceive or to ap-
preciate the real value and importance.
But the most prominent feature of her
destiny is, that the abolition of papal su-
premacy in this country must be referred
to her influence ; and that the only woman
ever permitted to effect a change in our
national and political institutions, has been
instrumental in introducing and establish-
ing a better system of things, whose effects
have altered the whole fabric of society.
On this single circumstance, perhaps, is
founded the diversity of opinion which to
this day prevails respecting the moral qua-
lities of Anne Boleyn, alternately the sub-
ject of unqualified censure and extravagant
praise. Catholic bigots and protestant en-
 thusiasts, calumniators and encomiasts, his-

torians and poets, have alike conspired to create and transmit of her an unfaithful and even a distorted portraiture. It is, however, worthy of remark, that whilst she is reproached for real virtues by Bayle, and by Marot stigmatised for pretended vices, Calderon, the great dramatic poet of Spain, leaves her chastity unimpeached. In his fine play, "The Schism of England," she is invested with the ambition of Lady Macbeth; but her ruin is attributed to Henry's fantastic and impetuous jealousy.

In offering these memoirs to the public, the author has to lament the absence of some important documents respecting Anne Boleyn's early life, which, till lately, were extant in the libraries of Paris and Berne, but which are now transferred to other seats of learning and science, where they may perhaps continue to be inaccessible. To introduce history without an obvious necessity, formed no part of the original plan; but it appeared impossible

to separate the details of Anne Boleyn's fate from those great political events, in which she was destined to perform an important part : still less could her character and conduct be understood without preliminary sketches of the customs and manners of the age ; to illustrate which, the minute description of Queen Mary's bridal progress, and other details, derived from our old garrulous chroniclers, have been introduced.

Whatever may be the defects in the plan or execution of this little work, the author ventures to hope she shall obtain credit for the assertion, that she has been actuated by no motives inconsistent with the spirit of candor and an humble but unaffected love of truth.

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

HENRY THE EIGHTH, HIS COURT, AND HIS
CHARACTER IN YOUTH.

ANNE BULLEN, or Boleyn, was born in 1507, two years before Henry the Eighth ascended the throne of England: the revolutions of her fortune are indissolubly connected with the changes of that eventful reign, and offer an interesting illustration of those earlier times, in which we discover rather a foreign than a familiar aspect; features strange to our sympathies, and repulsive to our conceptions of the English character. In contemplating this antiquated portraiture of our country, we are admonished, by certain internal feelings, of the immeasurable distance between us. It is not alone the exterior that creates this

impression of remoteness and alienation : imagination might renovate fashions long since decayed, or impart grace to beauty and honor mouldering in oblivion. We could be reconciled to the coat of mail and ponderous spear, but we recoil from the image of England, entrammelled by ignorance and superstition, abetting persecution and oppression, and submitting with pusillanimous baseness to become alternately the minister and the victim of tyranny and injustice. Mortified and disgusted, we are ready to disclaim affinity with a race in whom we discover no indications of those powerful energies, those expansive feelings of justice and humanity, which it is the pride of our national faith to identify with the air we breathe ; but which it should be the part of more enlightened patriotism to ascribe to the benignant influence of truth and liberty.

In referring to the life of Anne Boleyn, it is scarcely possible not to become aware

of our obligations to knowledge and culture, and of the inseparable connection between the interests of morality and the cause of civil and religious freedom. It is worthy of remark, that Henry, however sanguinary and despotic, was not more unprincipled than contemporary princes, or less esteemed than his immediate predecessors. Of the insurrections that occasionally disturbed his tranquillity, there were scarcely any that originated in generous indignation or patriotic energy : the same people who acquiesced without repugnance in the immolation of Edmund de la Pole, and tacitly approved the unconstitutional murder of Buckingham, scrupled not to invade the rights of property if they clashed with their favorite pursuits *, or to violate

* In 1514, the citizens of London sallied forth with shovels and spades, and breaking down the inclosures of garden ground, in the villages of Hoxton, Hackney, and Islington, converted them to a field of archery. See also, in Godwin's History of Henry the Eighth, an account of their disorderly behaviour in 1517, on what was vulgarly called Evil May Day.

the laws of hospitality whenever their passions were excited by cupidity or prejudice. In condemning the hypocrisy and cruelty of the monarch, it is impossible not to stigmatise the corruption and baseness of the people ; and if the despotism of Henry provoke execration, the submission of his subjects must equally excite contempt. During the greater part of his reign, it is notorious, that he coveted and possessed popularity in a degree seldom equalled by the most meritorious princes: this flattering homage he owed not to the wisdom of his laws, or the splendour of his achievements, but to social instincts and personal accomplishments, to a certain chivalrous gallantry of carriage, unbounded magnificence, measureless prodigality, and ostentatious affability ; above all, perhaps to the address with which, like a skilful actor, he rendered his own vanity and egotism subservient to the gratification of popular taste. Having mounted the throne at the age of eighteen,

Henry possessed, in his youth alone, a powerful attraction, and it was a circumstance highly favorable to his prosperity, that in him were reconciled the opposing factions of York and Lancaster, and in him revived the genuine royalty of the English crown.

It is well known, that Henry had received an education superior to what was then usually bestowed on princes : he spoke and wrote with fluency in the French and Latin languages, understood music, was addicted to the study of theology, and, above all, passionately devoted to Thomas Aquinas ; but it was by more elegant and more popular accomplishments, that he engaged the affections of his subjects : he loved music, played on several instruments, and was even occasionally a composer ; he danced with incomparable agility ; and in hunting, hawking, and shooting, constantly exhibited his spirit and activity ; but, above all, he *jousted* with skill ; and to excel in this manly exercise, was at once to an-

nounce pretensions to strength and courage, to evince a noble emulation with renowned heroes, and challenge by anticipation the honors of military fame. To enhance the value of these advantages, Henry was, confessedly, the handsomest man in his court ; and, by his marriage with Catherine of Arragon, gave to the people a queen lovely in person and in mind, of exemplary prudence and virtue, and truly gentle and feminine in her manners.

During a residence of several years in England, Catherine had been endeared to the people by her unaffected piety and benevolence : and as, like Henry, she possessed considerable learning, she cordially co-operated in his liberal patronage of literature. Educated in the decorous court of Ferdinand and Isabella, she appears not to have ever relished the boisterous amusements and convivial spirit of the English nobility ; but at this period she betrayed nothing like rigor or austerity ;

and whilst the gravity of her deportment tempered the exuberant vivacity of Henry's manners, she evinced a tenderness and sensibility that irresistibly engaged his affections. Six years of seniority had rather increased, than diminished her attractions ; nor can it be doubted, that, during the early part of her marriage, she held an undivided empire in her husband's heart. It was, therefore, with a natural and amiable pride, that Henry associated this queen in his coronation, of which the most indefatigable chronicler * of the age has left the following lively picture.

“ If I should declare what pain, labour, and diligence, the taylors, embroiderers and goldsmiths took, both to make and devise garments for lords, ladies, knights, and esquires, and also for decking, trapping, and adorning of coursers, gennets, palfreys, — it were too long to rehearse ; but for a

* Hall.

surety, more rich, nor more strange, nor more curious works, hath not been seen, than were prepared against this coronation.

“ On the 21st day of this month of June, the King came from Greenwich to the Tower, over London Bridge, and so by Grace Church, with whom came many a well-apparelled gentleman, but in especiall the Duke of Buckingham, which had a gounne all of goldsmith’s work, very costly, and there the King rested till Saturday next ensuing.

“ Friday the twenty and two day of June, every thing being in a readiness for his coronation, his Grace, with the Queen, being in the Tower of London, made there Knightes of the Bathe, to the number of twenty and four, with all the observances and ceremonies to the same belonging.

“ And the morrow following, being Saturday, the 23d day of the said month, his Grace, with the Queen, departed from the Tower through the city of London, against

whose coming, the streets where his Grace should pass were hanged with tapistrie and clothe of Arras. And the great part of the south side of Chepe, with cloth of gold, and some part of Cornhill also. And the streets railed and barred on the one side from over against Grace Church, unto Bread Street, in Cheapside, where every occupation stood in their liveries in order, beginning with base and mean occupations, and so ascending to the worshipful craftes; highest and lastly stood the Mayor with the Aldermen. The goldsmiths' stalls, unto the end of the Old Change, being replenished with virgins in white, with branches of white wax: the priests and clerks in rich copes, with crosses and censers of silver, with censuring his Grace and the Queen also as they passed.

“ The features of his body, his goodly personage, his amiable visage, princely countenance, with the noble qualities of his royale estate, to every man known, needeth

no rehearsal, considering, that for lack of cunning, I cannot express the gifts of grace and of nature that God hath endowed him withal: yet, partly to describe his apparel, it is to be noted, his Grace ware in his uppermost apparel a robe of crimson velvet furred with ermine, his jacket or coat of raised gold, the placard embroidered with diamond rubies, emerandes, great pearls, and other rich stones, a great * banderike aboute his neck of great † balasses. The trapper of his horse, damask gold, with a deep purfell of ermyns: his knights and esquires for his body in crimson velvet; and all the gentlemen, with other of his chapel, and all his officers and household servants were appareled in scarlet. The barons of the Five Portes bare the canopy, or clothe of estate. For to recite unto you the great estates by name, the order of their going, the number of the lords spiritual and temporal, knights, esquires, and

* Collar.

† Rubies.

gentlemen, and of their costly and rich apparel, of several devises and fashions; who tooke up his horse best, or who was richest besene, it would ask long time, and yet I should omit many things, and fail of the number, for they were very many: wherefore I pass over; but this I dare well say, there was no lack or scarcity of cloth of gold, cloth of silver broderie, or goldsmiths' work."

The chronicler then mentions the procession of the nine children of honor, each mounted on a steed, decorated with the name and arms of a province of the king's dominions; an ostentatious display, derived from the brilliant era of Edward the Third, since, in addition to Cornwall and Wales, it assumed the fictitious sovereignty of Normandy, Gascony, Guienne, and Anjou. The Queen's retinue appears to have been equally magnificent and far more attractive.—“ In a litter richly ornamented sat Catherine, borne by two white palfreys trapped in

cloth of gold ; her person apparelled in white satin embroidered ; her long black hair hanging down her back, beautiful and goodly to behold ; and on her head a coronal, set with many rich orient stones.

“ Her ladies followed in chariots, a sort of car containing six persons, and the quality of each was designated by the gold or silver tissue habiliments ; and with much joy and honor they came to Westminster, where was high preparation made, as well for the coronation, as for the solemn feasts and jousts to be had and done.”*

“ What should I speak,” continues the

* At the dinner the King’s estate was on the right hand, and the Queen’s on the left ; the cupboard of nine stages. Their noble personages being set, at the bringing in of the first course, the trumpet sounded, and in came the Duke of Buckingham mounted on a courser richly trapped and embroidered, and the Lord Steward likewise, on a horse trapped, came in cloth of gold riding before the service, which was sumptuous, with many subtleties, strange devices, with several poesies, and many dainty dishes.

chronicler, “of the sumptuous, fine, and delicate meats prepared for this high and honorable coronation, provided for as well in the parties beyond the seas, as in many and sundry places within this realm, where God so abundantly hath sent such plenty and foison? or of the honourable order of the services; the clean handling and breaking of meats; the ordering of the dishes, with the plentiful abundance; so that none of any estate being there did lack, nor no honorable and worshipful person unfeasted?” ~

From the vivacity of his descriptions it might be supposed that the writer had himself been one of the enviable beings admitted to that unparalleled banquet, which he pronounces to have been *more honorable* “than that of the great Cæsar, whom so many historiographers set out and magnify.” Jousts and masques succeeded; and in these the populace had their full share of enjoyment. It may, perhaps, be

doubted, whether the *rare and excellent* device of the castle, invested by a silvery fountain, and embellished with a flowing vine, imparted half the delight inspired by rivulets of *claret* and *malmsey* spouted from the hideous lips of some sphinx-like monster. The supreme object of attraction appears to have been a mountainous castle, dragged slowly along, in which sat a lady, who, under the imposing name of Pallas, displayed a crystal shield; and with many grimaces presented six of her scholars to the King, as challengers in the combat. To this redoubtable personage was opposed one equally sublime, the goddess Diana, in whose behoof appeared a troop of foresters, who, breathing from their mellow-toned horn a sylvan strain, ushered in the appropriate pageant of a park, within whose chequered pales of green and white were *living* deer; but sad was the fate of these victims to pleasure, who were no sooner allowed to escape from their enclosure than

they were chased by hounds, attacked, and killed almost in the Queen's presence. Such was the refinement, such the humanity of our forefathers !

In justice to Henry it must be admitted, that he was not without capacities for better things ; and that he often displayed considerable address in animating and polishing those puerile amusements, in which he was required to participate. At this juvenile period, the prominent feature of his character was vanity, but of that inoffensive cast, apparently springing from exuberance of good humour, which often assumes the expression of benevolence. To outshine his companions was the first object, to delight them the next : like an actor he courted popular applause, and in the presence of ambassadors or other distinguished foreigners, this solicitude became more strikingly apparent ; but in all his petty struggles for pre-eminence, he secured

the good will and inspired the enthusiasm of the people.

One day an engagement having been made by some of his courtiers to run at the ring for a wager, the King declared his willingness to enter the lists with six companions, the prize being promised to him who, within a certain space of time, should most often reach the goal. At the hour appointed, the ambassadors, the court, the ladies, repaired, with the pomp and ceremony usual on such occasions, to the barrier where at the sound of the trumpet appeared the King and his martial train, each mounted on a mettled courser, clothed in purple velvet and cloth of gold : the royal steed was distinguished by his embroidered drapery, and the gallant plume of feathers pendant from his head, and which rose ambitiously to the saddle of the rider. The signal being given, the coursers flew like lightning : each cavalier ran twelve courses : the youthful monarch struck the

ring five times, and finally bore away the prize in triumph, abandoning the ornaments of his charger to the applauding multitude. In another public festival at Greenwich, the King challenged all comers to fight with the target; and afterwards exhibited still greater prowess in hurling the spear: nor did the indefatigable prince desist till he had achieved equal honor with the two-handed sword.

In the present advanced state of civilization, the passion that once existed for the fatiguing pleasures of the tilting-field might appear incredible, but for the reflection that this exercise was reserved exclusively for men of gentle blood, and that it formed a strong and impassable line of demarcation between the higher and lower orders of the community. In the martial exercise of fencing, the young cavalier acquired courtesy and dignity, mingled with that intrepid martial deportment so well calculated to impress respect and to inspire

sentiments of awe and deference ; nor was this personal distinction altogether so chimerical as might at first sight be supposed, since the accomplished jousting, who, under his cumbrous weight of armour, could skilfully poise the lance or wield the ponderous spear, must unquestionably have possessed a degree of strength and physical force far beyond the ordinary standard of bravery and vigor ; whilst the consciousness of high pretensions and still higher responsibility could not but rouse a desperate courage, which prompted to deeds of unconquerable heroism and deathless fame. With impressions such as these, it is not surprising that a single-handed knight should sometimes perform prodigies of valor which seem almost to authenticate the legends of chivalry, and realise the visions of romance.

Even to the citizens and minor gentry, who were not allowed to share in the perils and honors of jousting, these exhibitions

afforded a rich and inexhaustible source of entertainment. No sooner was a tournament announced, than the city, the court, and the country appeared to receive a simultaneous movement. The tilt-yard was gravelled for the combatants; a theatre or a booth was erected for the spectators. The steeds were trained and caparisoned; whilst goldsmiths, embroiderers, and various artisans were required to furnish articles of finery and magnificence, invention was racked to supply apposite mottoes, poesies, and devices. When the eventful day arrived, the most lively interest was created for the respective challengers, or defendants; and in the true spirit of speculation, bets were laid on the issue of each succeeding contest. A scrutinising glance was cast on the balconies, in which the ladies presided, on whose demeanor shrewd conjectures were hazarded respecting their private sentiments; and often were the mysteries of the heart elicited by a portentous

not be doubted, but that this inflated style of adoration, though well understood to mean nothing, might often have been adopted when the passion was more genuine than the object was legitimate. The invention of devices, favors, emblems, with their concomitants of masques and *disguises*, the allegorical personifications and melodramatic exhibitions borrowed from romance, must have been singularly well adapted to facilitate intrigues and to conceal them from detection. But, whatever might be the errors or discrepancies belonging to this Gothic system of manners, it obtained equally in France, in Italy, and Spain, and formed among the European nobility, a sort of fellowship not dissimilar to the brotherhood that subsisted in religious orders.

It was not only in jousting, that Henry presented himself before the public eye. With an affability that reflects equal credit on his good humour and sagacity, he

adopted the prejudices, and condescended to the local or traditionary customs of the people. Not a festival occurred, but was celebrated at court according to primitive usage: sometimes in a vein of frolic, the king assumed the garb of Robin Hood, the popular outlaw, and in that chosen character, once surprised the modest Catherine and her demure ladies, not without creating momentary sensations of terror and confusion. On May-day, it was his pride to rise with the lark, and, with a train of courtiers splendidly attired in white and silver, to hasten to the woods, from whence he bore home the fragrant bough in triumph. When he quitted Greenwich for Windsor, or the sweet sylvan retreat of Havering Bower*, he hawked and hunted with the neighbouring gentry, and beguiled his sedentary hours by playing on the flute, or the virginal, setting songs to music, or inventing ballets; nor must it be

* In Essex.

forgotten, that he even composed two sacred masses, an event which his courtly chronicler records with becoming reverence.

The regularity and decorum generally established in modern courts, had then no existence. Amidst the most ostentatious pomp the distinctions of rank were often discarded, and during certain public festivals, the people seemed, by prescriptive right, to enjoy perfect equality with their sovereign. *

* On May-day, when Henry was returning to Greenwich from his annual expedition to the woods, he met on the road the pageant of a ship with outspread sails, the master of which, saluting the king and his noble company, announced himself to be a mariner, come from many a strange port, to see if any deeds of arms were to be done in the country, that he might report them to other realms. A herald demanding the name of the ship, the pretended mariner replied, "She is called *Fame*, and is laden with good *renown*." Then said the herald, "if you will bring your ship into the bay of *Hardiness*, you must double the point of *Gentleness*, and there I shall send a company that will meddle with your merchandize." Here Henry interposing exclaimed. "Sithens renown is their merchandize, let us buy it if we can." Then the ship shot

It had been an object of solicitude with Henry the Seventh, to establish in his court a regular system of etiquette, and to create for every circumstance connected with his domestic life, a certain degree of interest and sympathy in the people. By the advice of his mother, the celebrated Countess of Derby, certain ordinances were promulgated, regulating the ceremonial to be observed in the christening of a prince or princess, and enforcing the old custom imposed on a queen-consort, previous to the birth of a royal infant, of publicly withdrawing to her chamber.*

forth a peal of guns, and sailed before the King's company, crowded with flags and banners, till it came to the Tilt-yard.

* In Leland's *Collectanea*, we find the following ordinances made by Margaret Countess of Derby, from a manuscript in the Harleian library: — " Her Highness's pleasure being understood in what chamber she will be delivered, the same must be hanged with rich cloth of arras, sydes, rowffe, windowes and all, excepte one window, which must be hanged so as she may have light when it pleaseth her; then must there be set a

Although the Countess survived the accession of Henry VIII. but a few months, her memory was still held in veneration ; nor, during the dynasty of the Tudors, were her laws permitted to be impugned. In conformity, therefore, with the old custom, Catherine, in December (1510), took to her chamber at Richmond rather than Westminster, wishing, perhaps, to escape in part the publicity attached to this ceremony, which, however embellished by pomp and splendor, was calculated to impress the

royale bed, and the flore layed all over and over with carpets, and a cup-borde covered with the same suyte that the chambre is hanged withal."—On entering the great chamber, the Queen was permitted to exercise her own discretion whether she would sit or stand, in receiving wine and spices.

When the Queen had once entered, all individuals of the other sex were formally excluded : none but ladies or female attendants were permitted to approach her presence ; women alone performed the functions of panterers, sewers, and butlers ; and the men who assisted, passed not beyond the vestibule leading to the apartment.

mind with melancholy sentiments.* The birth of a prince on new-year's day, afforded

* Of this ceremony, as performed by Elizabeth, the wife of Henry VII., the following description is preserved in Leland's Collectanea.

“Upon All-allow Even the queene tooke her chamber at Westminster, gretly accompanied with ladies and gentilwomen; that is to say, the king's mother, the Duchesse of Norfolk, and many others; having before her the greate parte of the nobles of this *royalme* present at this parliament. She was led by the Earl of Oxinford and the Earl of Derby. The Reverend Father in God, the Bishop of Excester, song the mass in pontificalibus, and after Agnus Dei. Then the queene was led as before. The Earles of Shrewsby and of Kente hylde the towel when the queene toke her rights, and the torches were holden by knights, and after mass accompanied as before; when she was commen into hir grete chamber she stode under her cloth of estate, then thir was ordered a voide of espices and sweet wine: that *doon*, my lord the queene's chamberlain, in very goode wordes, desired, in the qucen's name, the people thir present to pray God to send her the good *houre*; and so she departed to her inner chamber, which was hanged and seyled with riche clothe of blue arras, with fleur-de-lys of gold. “ In that chambre was a rich bed and palliet, “ the whiche palliet had a marvellous riche canopé “ of gold, with velvet pall, garnished with riche red “ roses; also there was an autar well furnyshed with

a pretext for exhibitions of a more exhilarating aspect.

The untimely fate of this heir of York and Lancaster might invite the moralist to expatiate on the vanity of human expectations, but that the theme is already exhausted, and that the mournful lesson it inculcates is too painfully impressed by every page of human experience. From the moment of his birth, when Catherine with a mother's pride presented him as a new-year's gift to her delighted lord, he had been an object of almost idolatrous love and

“ reliques and a cup-borde of nine stages well and
 “ richly garnished. Then she reconmended her to
 “ the good praiers of the lords, and my lord her cham-
 “ berland drew the Travis; from thenceforth no
 “ maner of officer came into the chambre, but ladies
 “ and gentlewomen after the old costume. — A few
 “ days after this ceremony, however, a French noble-
 “ man of the highest rank was, by special favor, ad-
 “ mitted to an audience of Her Highness, with whom
 “ he found only the Countess of Derby and the Queen-
 “ dowager Elizabeth.”

homage. * Innumerable benedictions were showered on his unconscious head, and the prayers of a generous people unavailingly offered for his health and prosperity. Among the feasts and festivals in honor of his birth, was one, of which the memory long survived the term of his ephemeral existence, and in which may be discerned some faint indications of improving taste. †

* The prince expired on the 22d of February. "The king," says Hall, "took this sad chance wondrous wisely; and, the more to comfort the queen, he dissembled the matter, and made no great mourning outwardly; but the queen, like a *natural woman*, made much lamentation."

† "At Westminster," says Hall, "solemn jousts were proclaimed in honor of the queen; and on the twelfth of February, the king and his three aids or supporters, Sir Thomas Knevet, the earl of Devonshire, and Sir Edward Neville entered the hall, each armed cap-à-pee, with a fictitious name quartered on his shield. To the Earl was assigned the allegorical appellation of *Bon Vouloir*; Sir Thomas Knevet was designated by *Bon Espoir*; and Sir Edward Neville by *Vaillant Desir*; whilst the King, the universal challenger and enterpriser, could be nothing less than *Cœur Loyal*. By a fantastical device, the

“ On the morrow, after dinner,” says the chronicler, “ the company assembled in the
 “ hall, when, at the sound of the trumpet,
 “ many a nobleman and gentleman vaulted
 “ on their steeds, after whom followed cer-
 “ tain lords, mounted on palfreys, trapped
 “ in cloth of gold; many gentlemen on foot,
 “ clad in russet sattin, and yeomen in russet
 “ damask, scarlet hose, and yellow caps;
 “ then issued the King from his pavilion of

tablet in which the names of these *quatre chevaliers de la forêt* were inscribed, was suspended on an artificial tree, to which the following scroll was appended:—

‘ The noble lady Renown, considering the good and gracious fortune which it hath pleased God to send her dear and best beloved cousins, the King and Queen of England and of France, that is to say, the birth of a young prince, hath sent eight knights, born in her realm; that is to say, *Cœur Noble, Vaillant Desir, Bon Vouloir, et Joyeux Penser*, to furnish and *coply* the certain articles as followeth; And forasmuch, as after the order and honor of arms, it is not lawful for any man to enterprise arms in so high a presence without his stock and lineage be of nobles descended.’ ”

“ cloth of gold.” His mettled courser loaded with the same gorgeous drapery, and on his gilded chafrons nodded a graceful plume spangled with gold. The King’s three aids appeared in equal state ; each, armed cap-à-pee, sat beneath a crimson pavilion. Next followed in procession the nine pages or children of honor, each gallantly bestriding a palfrey, of which the housings were embroidered with words and poesies. Then entered, from the other side of the field, on the part of the defenders, Sir Charles Brandon on horseback, habited as a religious recluse, who, unheralded by trumpet or minstrel, preferred to the Queen his lowly suit that she would be pleased to allow him to run in her presence ; the boon was no sooner granted, than eagerly divesting himself of his robe, he exposed to view a complete set of armour ; and galloping to the tilt-end of the field, was instantly surrounded by his supporters. During this interval entered singly the esquire,

young Henry Guilford, clad in gold and silver tissue, but completely enveloped in a pageant resembling a castle ; its glittering walls chequered with mystic rhymes, invoking blessings on the royal pair : behind him came his men, all drest in the same livery of silver tissue, who, having made obeisance to the Queen, passed to the field. Then followed the Marquis of Dorset, and his brother-in-law, Sir Thomas Boleyn, both habited as pilgrims from St. Jago's shrine, with a train of sable-suited attendants. The procession was closed by several lords in armour, mounted on steeds superbly ornamented. Amidst this martial pomp, appeared pageants of most ludicrous and fantastic incongruity. Arrows were encased in crimson damask ; and, amongst other articles was a silver greyhound, bearing a tree of pomegranates, by whose branches it was almost concealed from view. At length the trumpets sounded to the charge ; the knights spurred their

steeds; lance encountered lance. From the balconies the ladies waved their handkerchiefs, and the concourse of spectators gazed intently on the combat. As usual, the royal party prevailed, and to the King was awarded the first prize: the crowd dispersed, and Henry decorously attended his devout consort to vespers. But not thus were to terminate the pleasures of this laborious day. After supper, the King and his court repaired to the Whitehall, where a spectacle was prepared of which the lower orders were allowed to participate. An interlude was first performed by the children of the chapel; after this, the King, according to ancient usage, conferred on the Irish Chief, O'Neale, the honors of knighthood. Then was heard a symphony; the minstrels played, and the lords and ladies danced; and Henry, observing how much this exhibition interested the spectators, stole away to prepare for them a still higher gratification. And now was attention

arrested by a flourish of trumpets : and lo! an enormous machine was wheeled into the hall, completely enveloped in cloth of arras. At this portentous sight curiosity became intense ; when a cavalier suddenly issuing from the pageant, represented to the Queen, that in a certain garden of pleasure, there was a golden arbour, wherein were lords and ladies *much desirous* to show pastime to the Queen and ladies, if they might be licensed so to do. Permission being granted, the cloth was removed, and discovered a beautiful garden, in which were trees of hawthorn, eglantine, and rosiers, vines and gilliflowers all wrought of gold. In an arbour appeared six ladies, all dressed in silver and satin, on whose heads were bonnets open at the four quarters, and *outrised* with flat-gold of damask. The orellets were of roses, wreathed on *lampas * doucke*,

* Of this passage the following explanation has been suggested by an author justly celebrated for the ingenuity, the erudition, and good taste that have uniformly

so that the gold showed through the *lampas doucke*. In this garden also was the King, robed in purple satin, embroidered with letters of gold, composing his assumed name of Cœur Loyal. The gentlemen having joined the ladies, they danced together, whilst the pageant was removed to the extremity of the hall, for the purpose of receiving them when the ballet should be ended; but the rude *people* (as Hall calls them) ran to the pageant, which, either from curiosity or cupidity, was presently demolished, and, to escape their violence, the royal and noble performers found it necessary to pluck off the golden *letters*

directed his researches. In the Flemish language, *lampas* signifies a fine transparent linen or crape, through which the gold on the orells would appear transparent; it is very probable that this was an article of commerce, imported from Flanders in the time of Henry the Eighth. *Lampas* in counting-house orthography, is no great corruption, and the above crape may therefore be simply, *Douche* (*Dutch*); *lampas doucke* being an error of the press.

attached to their robes, *of which one man picked up enough to produce three pounds from the goldsmith.*"

It is worthy of remark, that the foregoing description of the tournament is almost the prose transcript of the beautiful poetical sketch preserved by Chaucer, in his fable of the Flower and the Leaf, and exquisitely embellished by Dryden; and this exact correspondence proves the conformity of manners which prevailed in the age of Edward the Third, and Henry the Eighth.

Before the rest

The trumpets issued in white mantles dress'd;
 A numerous troop, — and all their heads around,
 With chaplets green of cerial oak were crown'd,
 And at each trumpet was a banner bound;
 Which, waving in the wind, displayed at large
 Their master's coat of arms, and knightly charge.
 Broad were the banners, and of snowy hue,
 A purer web the silk-worm never drew;
 The chiefs about their necks escutcheons wore
 With orient pearls, and jewels powdered o'er;
 Broad were their collars too, and every one
 Were set about with many a costly stone.
 Next to them kings at arms, a goodly train,
 In proud array came prancing o'er the plain:

Their cloaks were cloth of silver mix'd with gold;
 And garlands green around their temples roll'd;
 Rich crowns were on their royal 'scutcheons placed,
 With sapphire, diamonds, and with rubies graced;
 And as the trumpets their appearance made,
 So these in habits were alike arrayed;
 But with a pace more sober and more slow,
 And twenty rank in rank, they rode a-row;
 The pursuivants came next — in number more,
 And like the heralds each his 'scutcheon bore;
 Clad in white velvet, all their troop they led,
 With each an oaken chaplet on his head:
 Nine royal knights in equal rank succeed,
 Each warrior mounted on a fiery steed,
 In golden armour, glorious to behold,
 The rivets of their arms were nailed in gold;
 Their surcoats of white ermine fur were made,
 The cloth of gold between, that cast a glittering shade;
 The trappings of their steeds were of the same,
 The golden fringe even set the ground on flame,
 And drew a precious trail; a crown divine
 Of laurels, that about their temples twine.
 Three henchmen were for every knight assign'd,
 All in rich livery clad, and of a kind:
 White velvet, but unshorn, for cloaks they wore
 And each one in his hand a truncheon bore;
 The foremost held a helm of rare device,
 A prince's ransom could not pay the price;
 The second bore the buckler of his knight;
 The third of corneil wood a spear upright,
 Headed with piercing steel, and polished bright: —

Like to their lords, their equipage was seen,
 And all their foreheads crowned with garlands green,
 And after these came, armed with spear and shield,
 A host so great as covered all the field;
 And all their foreheads like the knights before,
 With laurels ever-green were shaded o'er,
 Or oak, or other leaves of lasting kind,
 Tenacious of the stem, and firm against the wind.
 Some in their hands, besides the lance and shield,
 The boughs of woodbine or of hawthorn held;
 Or branches for their mystic emblems took,
 Of palm, of laurel, or of cerial oak.
 Thus marching to the trumpet's lofty sound,
 Drawn in two lines adverse, they wheel'd around, }
 And in the middle meadow took their ground : }
 Among themselves the tourney they divide,
 In equal squadrons ranged on either side;
 Then turned their horses' heads, and man to man,
 And steed to steed opposed, the jousts began :
 They lightly set their lances in the rest,
 And, at the sign, against each other press'd,

In tracing this approximation of manners
 and amusements under the Plantagenets
 and the Tudors, we are naturally tempted
 to enquire whether civilization had retro-
 graded or advanced, was stationarv or pro-
 gressive? After a lapse of more than

two centuries, the age of Edward the Third continued to be quoted as the *ne plus ultra* of English glory ; and, to reclaim his triumphs, was still the pretext of ambitious princes, and the object of the credulous people. Unquestionably, the nation had increased in wealth, and the court improved in luxury. The royal cupboard of plate had added three stages to its former dimensions. Nobles and priests were robed in cloth of gold ; cavaliers and their steeds exhibited equal magnificence ; but where was the elegant gallantry of the Black Prince, or the mingled courtesy and dignity of his illustrious father ? Music and dancing, masquing and revelry filled the palace ; but the minstrels of the lay had departed ; nor was there found another Chaucer to sustain the honor of the English muse. To scholars and wits it was occasionally permitted to share the great man's hospitality ; whilst buffoons were constantly and fondly protected : every splendid or luxurious

household had its *fool* or *jester* ; and of all the king's officers this should seem to have been the privileged favourite. But it must also be remembered, that in the age of Edward and his successor, Wickliffe *reasoned*, whilst Chaucer *sung*. The germs of the Reformation sprung forth ; and but for the oppression of the clergy, and the superstition of the people, the conflicts and the triumphs of Luther had been gloriously anticipated. In both ages authority was opposed to reason, and bigotry to humanity : in both ages the advocates for free enquiry were consigned to dungeons, and the champions of religious liberty committed to the flames. If, in 1325, the bones of Wickliffe * were exhumed forty years

* The bones of Wickliffe were taken up and burnt forty-one years after death. In the reign of Henry the Eighth, Hun, a merchant-taylor, was committed to prison by the Bishop of London, on the charge of having Wickliffe's Bible in his possession ; after his death, other articles of heresy being exhibited against him, his corpse was committed to the flames. This

after death, Hun's corpse was, in 1514, in like manner, dragged from the tomb to be burnt with living heretics ; but it should be remembered, that Wickliffe and his followers were protected by the government against the bishops, and that the bishops were supported by the people. Under Henry the Eighth, the reformers, oppressed by the government, made zealous friends and found strenuous supporters in all classes of the community ; a circumstance which distinctly proves that an important change had gradually been produced in the national character. Fortunately the encroachments of the clergy on the laity had aroused that mighty, that invincible spirit of freedom, before which the strong arm of power shrinks into feebleness, and tyranny confesses the claim of

iniquitous transaction shook the credit of the clergy more than Luther's invectives ! In France such sacrilege was frequently committed, under the imposing name of ecclesiastical authority.

justice. In the school of suffering, the people had been taught to think and to act, to exercise the prerogative of reason, to assert the rights of humanity; the corruptions inherent in the old system were no longer to be concealed from suspicion or protected from contempt. The roots were already loosened, before the impetuous storm assailed the degenerate branches. Nor was it for the church alone, that an eventful crisis was impending. In many existing customs and institutions might be detected symptoms of decay; the forerunners of approaching dissolution: the circumstances originally concurring in their formation, had ceased to operate. What had once been necessary, was no longer useful; discord had succeeded to harmony; universal evil had grown out of temporary or partial good. To this class belonged the system of chivalry, so admirably adapted to a feudal and military age, but obviously misplaced in a more polished and regularly organized society.

Under the Tudors, the passion for glory, coeval with the birth of chivalry, had degenerated into a fondness for pomp and pageantry ; and even in their exterior, the slashed sleeves, and nodding plumes, betrayed a foppery unknown to the heroes of Poitiers and Cressy. The predilection for jousting had also an inevitable tendency to exalt physical above moral qualities, to give undue value to the accidental distinctions of birth and fortune, to challenge for beauty and strength exclusive homage and supremacy, to expend on the short-lived season of youth all the treasures of human life, and leave nothing but selfish regrets, or sensuality, or superstition, for unhonored age.

In the clergy the discrepancy created by ancient usages and nascent principles was less open to observation. It was the privilege of their order, that men of talents, without regard to the invidious distinctions of *gentle* or *churlish* blood, might aspire to dignity and honor. They were allowed to

fill the highest offices of the state, to supersede hereditary rank, and take place of the most illustrious nobility ; but the sentiment from which they originally derived these privileges had gradually been weakened by their incautious abuse of power and wealth, their arrogant assumption of authority, and shameless perversion of all moral and religious obligations. Penances and pilgrimages were frequent ; masses and indulgences might be purchased ; monastic vows subsisted : but the self-denying spirit, the all-subduing enthusiasm that had led myriads to the Holy Sepulchre was extinct ; the sacred halo of imagination that once encircled the shrine of superstition had vanished ; the cloud of ignorance alone remained ; and there was enough of light to discern the surrounding darkness.

After the revival of letters the clergy, whatever state they assumed in their stalls, or chapters, were no longer omnipotent in the minds of the people ; the beneficent

invention of printing disseminated that knowledge hitherto engrossed by the great and the *privileged*; a powerful sympathy was thus created between the *learned* and the *vulgar*. Man communicated with man; and in this mental collision the energies long dormant were called into vigorous activity. Over the elements of the Reformation, which emanated from Wickliffe, persecution had vainly exercised its repelling power: there resided in them an immortal essence, a spirit impenetrable to violence, and incapable of annihilation. By the agency of a poor despised monk they were soon to assume another and more glorious form, to elicit truths still more important to the progress of moral and religious improvement; and ultimately to awaken that genuine love of justice, liberty, and independence, which can alone form the character of a noble and magnanimous people.

From a cursory glance of Henry's reign, it will be evident that those days of ig-

norance and despotism were pregnant with venality, perfidy, and corruption; nor, with the exception of the Mores, the Colets, and the Cranmers, shall we easily discover among the statesmen or the favorites of his day examples of disinterestedness, honor, and probity. Without referring to the records of conventual visitation, without appealing to the contempt almost universally avowed for *monastic drones*, or glancing at the suspicious reputations of their frail sisters, it may be remarked, that gaming and other profligate vices had infected both the court and the city, that the grossest immorality prevailed in the country, and that, generally speaking, the age of Henry was as little favorable to female modesty as to manly patriotism, and equally adverse to liberty and virtue.

To the era of the Reformation may be traced purer morals and more decorous manners. The example of Sir Thomas More's family was then no longer singular: female

cultivation ceased to be rare when learning became the badge of a superior station; the progress of civilization was rapidly accelerated, and in little more than the revolution of half a century, those citizens who had been accustomed to witness with transports the mummary of pageants and tournaments, were capable of relishing dramatic compositions; and, without attending other schools of rhetoric and philosophy than the theatres at Bankside and Blackfriars, insensibly refined their ideas, and formed their taste under the immortal auspices of Shakespeare.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE DESCENT OF THE BOLEYNES.—THE INTRODUCTION OF ANN BOLEYNE AT THE FRENCH COURT.

THE family of Bullen, or Boleyne, originally of French extraction, was transplanted to England soon after the Norman conquest; and having settled in Norfolk, continued gradually to extend its patrimonial demesnes, and to confirm its pretensions to pure and uncontaminated ancestry. During three centuries, however, the Boleynes, from father to son, appear to have aimed only at maintaining their rank and influence among the provincial gentry, till Sir Geoffrey (Bolen), amidst the conflicts of York and Lancaster, exchanged the pastimes of hawking and hunting, for the pursuits of com-

merce, and having entered the Mercer's Company, was, in 1457, advanced to the dignity of Lord Mayor of London, and subsequently invested with the titles of knighthood. In revolutionary times, hereditary distinctions are often levelled by accidental circumstances, and the possession of wealth becomes equivalent to power and nobility. The Lord of Hoo* and Hastings disdained not the alliance of the prosperous merchant, who, marrying one of his daughters, became the founder of a house, that was soon permitted to claim affinity with the noblest blood in the kingdom. Sir Geoffrey appears to have been one of those few favored individuals, who never miss the critical moment for taking the tide of fortune; he continued sedulously to improve every opportunity of advancement, and after having given his well-portioned daughters to men of birth

* This title became extinct.

and consequence*, reserved for his son an estate fully adequate to the pretensions of a noble bride, who was one of the co-heiresses of the great Earl of Ormond.†

In commemorating the singular felicity of this honorable citizen, it would be unjust to leave no record of his virtues; since he was not more conspicuous for shrewd sense, and enterprising perseverance, than for a munificent spirit, open-hearted liberality, and manly independence. Not satisfied with having conferred blessings on the community in which he lived, he endeared his name to posterity by a magnificent bequest of 1000*l.* to the city of London, and a charitable donation of 200*l.* to the poor of Norfolk, his native county.‡

* The daughters of Sir Geoffrey Bolen intermarried with the Cheyneys, the Heydons, and Fortescues of Norfolk.

† Thomas Boteler, or Butler, whose ancestors had suffered in the Lancastrian cause. See the third chapter.

‡ The remains of Sir Geoffrey Bolen are deposited in St. Leonard's church, near the Old Jewry. From an old record referred to in Bloomfield's History of

Sir William Boleyn, his son, was equally fortunate and more aspiring than his predecessor; he attached himself to the court, and was one of the eighteen knights, whom Richard the Third invested with the order of the Bath, at his magnificent coronation: he was afterwards appointed deputy for the coasts of Norfolk and Suffolk. His father-in-law, though an Irish peer, possessed exclusively the privilege of sitting in the English House of Lords, where he was even allowed to take precedence of English Barons. Such an alliance must naturally have awakened ambitious expectations; and either by the influence of the Earl, or his own dextrous management, Sir William succeeded in forming intermarriages with several noble families, by which the most brilliant prospects were opened to his view.* His san-

Norfolk, it appears, that he purchased the manor of Blickling, in Norfolk, of Sir John Falstaffe, Knight.

* Unlike his benevolent father, Sir William bequeathed 10*l.* to three priests to celebrate masses for his soul. He was interred in Norwich cathedral.

guine anticipations must, however, have been more than realised, by the subsequent union of his son Thomas, with Elizabeth, daughter of the Earl of Surrey, a nobleman, in whom high birth was exalted by chivalrous valour, munificent liberality, and refined taste.*

It was the avowed opinion of this peer, that the parliament alone could legitimate the authority of princes, and that whoever obtained its suffrage became the rightful sovereign. In conformity to this principle, he followed the banner of Richard the Third to Bosworth Field; an offence for which he was long immured in the Tower by Henry the Seventh. Being at length restored to favor, he displayed equal zeal and ability in the service of his new master, who, by an effort of magnanimity unparalleled in the race of Tudor, sanctioned the

* See Dr. Nott's very interesting account of the house of Howard, in his *Life of Surrey*.

nuptials of the Earl's eldest son, Lord Thomas Howard, with his affianced bride, the Lady Anne, who was not only of royal blood, but the younger sister of Henry's own queen Elizabeth. At the period of Sir Thomas Boleyn's marriage, the Earl of Surrey was in the zenith of power and prosperity, possessing the confidence of his sovereign, and the suffrage of the people. In sanctioning this unequal connection, he may be supposed to have consulted his daughter's inclination, rather than his own ambition; but if he accepted as a son the object of her choice, he appears to have exacted from him unconditional obedience. The will of Surrey was henceforth to be the arbiter of his actions; and thus formed on his lessons, and directed by his experience, the grandson of the honest independent citizen Sir Geoffrey, became a placeman, a pensioner, and a courtier.

In this career he was well fitted to succeed, by his native sagacity, and polished

manners ; nor was his wife less formed to adorn a court. In her father's castle, accustomed to an almost princely magnificence, she had been ill prepared to preside in a private mansion, however opulent or luxurious. In that martial age, the rich barons of England vied with its monarchs in the extravagance of their establishments, their splendid liveries, and numerous retainers. In some instances, indeed, the baronial castle assumed a character more truly royal than the king's palace. The noble house of Howard, like that of Percy, evinced a liberal predilection for literature and the arts, and alternately gave encouragement and protection to indigent poets, and adventurous scholars. Under the cautious administration of Henry the Seventh, useful talents alone were sought and respected, and diligence and circumspection preferred to more showy and brilliant accomplishments. During his reign Sir Thomas Boleyn was not des-

ained to obtain preferment, and he appears to have spent that interval in the retirement of his paternal mansion, at Rochford Hall* in Essex, where, in † 1507, his wife gave birth to the celebrated Anne, the scene of whose infancy is still pointed out to the curious enquirer, with many traditional observations. Henry the Eighth ascended the throne in 1509, and it was one of the first acts of his sovereignty to

* Rochford Hall, in Essex, long the seat of the Botclers and Ormonds; from them transferred, by marriage, to the Boleyns. Rochford Hall is still in existence, and at present in the occupation of Mr. Harrison. In 1774, all the Rochford property devolved on the Tilney family. The manor of Rochford now belongs to Mr. Wellesley Pole. For a further account, see the Appendix, No. II., at the end of the volume.

† This date decidedly refutes the infamous calumny of Sanders, who asserts that Henry the Eighth, to gratify an illicit passion for the wife of Sir Thomas Boleyn, sent him on an embassy to France, and that Anne was the offspring of this adulterous connection. In reality, Anne was born two years before Henry's accession to the throne.

confer the place of deputy-warden of the customs of Calais (a sinecure producing a salary of thirty-six pounds per annum) on Sir Thomas Boleyn, who, from this time, became familiar with the court; and, with his accomplished wife, regularly took part in the splendid entertainments given by their youthful sovereign.

If happiness be measured by prosperity, the period of Anne Bullen's infancy must have formed for her family a season of uninterrupted felicity. Her grandfather, the great Earl of Surrey, presided in the council; his three sons, the Lords Thomas, Edmund, and Edward, engrossed the highest honors of the state; whilst his son-in-law, Sir Thomas Boleyn, without aspiring to naval or military triumphs, occupied a place in the royal household, and was soon selected, with other confidential agents, for those diplomatic transactions, which were only entrusted to men of approved talents and discretion. Naturally timid and cir-

cumspect, his ambition appears to have been checked by caution : even his talents were veiled by discretion ; that exquisite tact of penetration, for which he has been called *the picklock of princes*, was but gradually unfolded ; and although associated or implicated in almost every embassy during the first five-and-twenty years of Henry's reign, he long continued to feel the ascendancy of the house of Howard, and to rank rather with the satellites of the court, than the confidential ministers of the sovereign. As a man of letters, and a fine gentleman, he was personally more acceptable to Henry than the high-born nobles, or powerful prelates, who challenged the right of directing his counsels. The King was still more attracted by the manners of the Lady Elizabeth, his consort, who often assisted in the masque, and mingled in its nocturnal revelry ; protected from reproach by the presence of

her husband or her own illustrious relatives. *

Born in a family that boasted of its love for letters, she possessed more cultivation than was usually found, even in ladies of exalted station. Henry relished her society, and as she was many years older than his queen, perhaps never suspected that his marked attentions † could be injurious to her reputation ; but, although the conduct of Elizabeth appears to have been perfectly correct, it may be doubted whether her pride and ambition did not predominate over the more amiable affections of her sex. In submitting to an early

* She appears to have been the person designated by Hall, in his description of a masque, (in 1510), in which the King took a part, and in which the Princess and five other ladies appeared as Ethiopians.

† She was, says Loyd, his solace, not his sin. — In the attentions of Henry, though sanctioned by custom and courtesy, and in the envy they excited, originated the scandalous stories afterwards propagated with such malicious zeal by the enemies of Anne Boleyn and the Reformation.

separation from her children, two of whom were educated in exile * from their native country, she might have sacrificed maternal tenderness to the pride of the Howards or the ambition of the Boleyns ; but in preparing for their future greatness, she must unquestionably have fulfilled her own conception of parental duty. In her age, not only moral feelings, but domestic affections were perverted by an artificial system of society : nobility was honoured as virtue, and grandeur mistaken for felicity.

During the first five years of Henry's reign, the Earl of Surrey maintained his ascendancy in his favour ; and as it was easy to perceive the King had little relish for the conversation of formal statesmen, he adroitly stigmatised the prudent maxims of Henry the Seventh, and rather stimu-

* Anne and George. Loyd asserts, that the latter was bred up as a page in the imperial court ; although he is known to have afterwards pursued his studies at Oxford. See "The Statesmen and Favorites of England."

lated than reproved the prodigality of his successor. By this delicate flattery, he might justly hope to acquire a permanent empire over the King's mind: but courtier is counteracted by courtier; and it was reserved for Fox, Bishop of Winchester, with the shortsightedness peculiar to cunning, to raise up against the ancient house of Howard a man of yesterday, on whose gratitude or dependence he weakly expected to establish an unanswerable claim to future subserviency and obedience. The object of this speculation was no other than the celebrated Wolsey, a man with whose character and fortune it is not easy to discover a parallel in ancient or modern history. It is notorious that this great statesman was a butcher's son, born at Ipswich, and indebted to its free-school for his scholastic attainments; an obligation he afterwards repaid by the foundation of a classical college. His childhood developed extraordinary powers

of application ; ambition incited him to exertion . and since it was only within the church that a man of churlish blood was permitted to cherish emulation, he became a churchman, pursued his studies at Oxford, and at the age of fifteen obtained a degree from Magdalen-college*, where his precocity procured him the appellation of the Boy-Bachelor. It was not long before he was elected master of Magdalen School, and, having (as a tutor) attracted the patronage of the Marquis of Dorset, by that nobleman was presented to the living of Leamington in Somersetshire, where, but for an unforeseen circumstance, he might have lived and died, unknown to kings or statesmen, in lettered ease and affluent obscurity.

But to Wolsey was allotted a different destiny ; and an auspicious disappointment conducted him to greatness. At the

* This college was founded by Cardinal Wolsey in 1518, when he was in the zenith of his power, and subsisted till the period of his fall, in 1529.

instigation of one Sir Amias Paulet, whom he had formerly offended, he received a personal affront, that either obstructed his induction, or induced him to relinquish his benefice.* Having once more to seek his fortune, he repaired to Calais, where he officiated as domestic chaplain of Sir John Naphant, a man connected with the court, and in habits of intimacy with Fox, Bishop of Winchester, the confidential counsellor of Henry the Seventh. An opportunity was not long wanting to call forth Wolsey's superior talents. In the progress of his abortive treaty of marriage with Margaret of Savoy, Henry having occasion to dispatch a trust-worthy mes-

* It has been said, that Wolsey was set in the stocks, a punishment reserved for base delinquents. Of whatever nature might be the injury received, it was afterwards amply revenged on Sir Amias Paulet, who was confined five years by the will of the omnipotent Chancellor; to appease whose vindictive spirit he erected a gatehouse over the Middle Temple, which subsisted till the great fire of London.

senger to Flanders, applied to Fox to recommend a prompt and intelligent agent : the person chosen was Wolsey, who being, in every sense of the word, a *ready man*, was no sooner furnished with his dispatches, than he hastened to St. Omers, obtained an interview with the Emperor, and having duly executed his commission, travelled night and day with such expedition that, on his way back, he actually intercepted a messenger whom the King had sent with instructions, which he had already anticipated. On proceeding to Court, the King, little suspecting that his commission was accomplished, gently rebuked him for having so long deferred his journey. An explanation followed, by which Henry was surprised into an acknowledgement of grateful admiration, and the diligent courier was soon rewarded with the deanery of Lincoln. On the death of this prince, he was appointed almoner to his successor, to whom he became first acceptable,

then necessary, and finally indispensable. Of Wolsey, in common with many other eminent personages, it might be observed, that he possessed every quality, good or bad, that conducts to fortune. To a daring spirit he added indefatigable perseverance; with the graces of eloquence he united exquisite flexibility and address, and all those aptitudes to dissimulation so essential to the favorite and useful to the statesman. Unchecked by any fixed principles of rectitude, his unconquerable ambition usurped the place of social sympathies and moral feelings. His most permanent sentiment was pride; yet could he stoop to rise, and cared little by what means he achieved his favorite object. In his intercourse with the world he had learnt to be serious with the grave, and convivial with the gay; but whilst his native arrogance assumed the expression of liberality, or disinterestedness, or dignity, the vindictive passions lurked in his breast; and in the most brilliant

moments of his life he remained incapable of that magnanimity which scorns to trample on a fallen foe. Hitherto it had been his business to conciliate esteem, and inspire confidence; and such was his address, or his discretion, that his exaltation excited neither envy nor distrust even in the Bishop of Winchester, his original patron and benefactor. Wolsey was still the *ready man*; with powers of promptitude and self-possession never to be suspended; and happy were the king's counsellors, to devolve on him the task of communicating to their sovereign those dry official details, to which he evidently lent no willing ear: but it could not long escape the penetration of Henry, how much the humble Almoner surpassed the noble courtiers. On whatever theme he expatiated, persuasion dwelt on his lips; and the Monarch tasted in his conversation a degree of pleasure he experienced from no other society. Thus, by slow and imperceptible gradations, the obsequious priest

acquired and assumed supremacy over those to whom he had once yielded submission; and persons of the highest rank no longer disdained to solicit his mediation, and to cultivate his friendship. From the noble family of Howard, however, his elevation extorted not respect, nor even courtesy, till they unwillingly learnt to discover the extent of his influence. With Sir Thomas Boleyn alone he appears to have soon established an intercourse like intimacy and confidence.

The first five years of this reign were spent in a succession of tournaments, masques, pageants, and other elaborate puerilities. The King thirsted for military renown; but his passion was ungratified, till, by the machinations of the pope, and the intrigues of Ferdinand, his crafty father-in-law, a desultory war commenced against France, in which Henry, under pretence of assisting his father-in-law, officiously interfered without either profit or glory. The death of Sir Ed-

ward Howard, the Lord High Admiral of England *, inspired in the Earl of Surrey bitter feelings of hostility towards France. Wolsey affected to catch the patriotic enthusiasm of his master to revive the glorious days of Edward the Third; and that nothing might be wanting to the resemblance, Henry determined to assume the command of his army, and valiantly to combat in person. As a proof how little importance was attached to practical experience, the Lord Thomas Howard, though almost new to nautical affairs, was promoted to the post of Lord High Admiral, which had been filled meri-

* Sir Edward Howard, was one of the most gallant cavaliers of the age, and died, as he had ever wished to die, in struggling for glory; but unfortunately his life was sacrificed in a rash and abortive enterprize to destroy the French galleys in Brest Harbour. He was the most popular of the Howards, and his death was lamented as a national calamity. By this event, the care of his orphan daughters devolved on their grandfather; and one of them (Catherine) was afterwards destined to become the queen of Henry the Eighth.

toriously by his ill-fated brother. Queen Catharine was constituted Regent, and on the Earl of Surrey devolved the onerous task of directing her councils. In this expedition, Henry was attended, not only by his confidant, Wolsey, but by his first favorite, Charles Brandon, the history of whose rise is creditable to the moral feelings of Henry the Seventh, and throws a solitary gleam of goodness over the harsh features of the Tudor race. In the last struggles between York and Lancaster, his father, Sir William Brandon, who had strenuously espoused the cause of Henry of Richmond, fell, the victim of honour and fidelity, in Bosworth Field. His family was taken under the conqueror's protection; and Charles, the second son, having been constantly associated in the studies and pleasures of Prince Henry, continued even after his accession to the throne to retain the same place in his affections. At this period Charles, already a widower, was

confessedly one of the most handsome and accomplished cavaliers of the age, and endeared to his master by sympathy in tastes, habits, and amusements. Brandon alone had never to experience the fluctuations of his capricious humour, since to him he was uniformly kind, confiding, and indulgent. This extraordinary exemption, might, in some degree, be ascribed to the influence which early associations are universally found to possess over the human heart ; but is also to be accounted for by the favorite's obvious inferiority, in all but personal accomplishments, to the sovereign on whose protection he depended. Brandon was eminently brave, and emulous of military glory ; and it was equally the part of Henry to excite his ambition, and promote his fortune. He was, perhaps, not aware that his sister Mary, who had been contracted to the Prince of Castile, entertained for Brandon any warmer sentiment than friendship, although the extreme re-

pugnance which the princess expressed to the idea of leaving England might have naturally suggested such an inference. The confidence of which he was in this instance capable, becomes the more striking, when contrasted with those traits of suspicion and stubbornness which began to predominate in his character ; and, which, even in this brilliant hour of youth, betrayed him to an action the most base and inglorious. It is well known that the unfortunate Edmund de la Pole, who, by the artifices of Henry the Seventh, had been enticed from his asylum in Flanders, still languished in the Tower, to which he had been committed as a state prisoner ; even the ungenerous persecutor of the Plantagenets had pursued the victim no farther. Nor was any attempt made to cut short a life devoted to hopeless captivity, till, among other preliminary steps to the invasion of France, it appeared necessary to the Privy Council to dispose of a person

against whom no other crime could be alleged than that he was of royal blood, and might hereafter form plausible pretensions to the crown. When this question was debated in the Privy Council, Sir Thomas Boleyn, with characteristic caution, opposed the King's leaving England, whilst such a rival remained in existence. The Earl of Surrey, on the contrary, contended that it would be unsafe to trust to the fidelity of the army, unless the King commanded in person ; so little confidence was reposed in the loyalty of the subject, or the honour of the soldier, and so completely are despotism and ignorance subversive of security to the sovereign, and of probity in the people ! To put an end to doubts and scruples, Henry instantly signed the warrant for De la Pole's death ; and thus offered his first victim to those fantastic terrors, which, during his whole reign, ceased not to haunt his mind with ominous predictions of a disputed succession. In every age the so-

phistical doctrine of political expediency has lent its pernicious licence to cruelty and injustice. Under the dynasty of the Tudors, when the sense of rectitude was blunted by ignorance and superstition, the partial torpor of the understanding seems to have reached the heart ; since the immolation of De la Pole is scarcely noticed even by those contemporary historians who have inveighed against Henry's subsequent crimes. It was for Catharine alone to oppose this barbarous policy ; and although her intercession was unavailingly employed to rescue the injured prince from destruction, she ceased not to deplore his fate, predicting that his innocent blood would be avenged on his enemies and their posterity.* The

* Previous to Catharine's marriage with Arthur, her grandfather, Ferdinand, is said to have stipulated for the destruction of Edmund de la Pole, lest his future claims should interfere with the interests of his daughter's descendants. It is pretended by Le Grand and other Catholic writers, that Catharine considered her subsequent trials and misfortunes as ordained by retributory Providence.

horror with which she contemplated this legal murder, increased her melancholy in witnessing Henry's departure ; and it was her best consolation, to extract from Wolsey those minute details, which she hoped not to obtain from her husband. In the following letter she probably might be assisted by an English pen ; but the sentiments are evidently dictated by anxious feminine tenderness.

Catharine (of Arragon), Queen of England, to Wolsey,
(Orig. 1513.)*

“ Master Almoner, thinking that the King's dep'ting from Calais shall cause that I shall not so often hear from his grace, for the great business in his journey that every day he shall have, I send now my servant, to bring me word of the King and he shall tarry there till another cometh, and

* Copied from MS. in the British Museum. Caligula, D. VI. 28. — N. B. The words inclosed in brackets are supplied, the original being effaced.

so I shall hear every week from thence and so I pray you to take the [*pains*] with every one of my messengers to write to me of the King's health, and [*what*] he intendeth to do ; for when you be so near your enemies, I shall be [*miserable,*] till I see often letters from you, and doing this ye shall give me cause to thank you ; and I shall know that the mind ye have had to me continueth still, as my trust always hath been. The briefs that the pope sent to the King I was very glad to see, and I shall be more to hear that he is the mean, either to make an honourable peace for the King, or else help on his part, as much as he can, knowing that all the business that the King hath was first the cause of the church, and with this and the Emperor together, I trust to God that the King shall come home shortly, with as great victory as any prince in the world, and this I pray God send him without need of any other prince. — Sir Almoner, touching Francesse de Cassery's mat-

ter, I thank you for your labours therein : true it is she was my woman before she was married, but now, Sir, she cast herself away ; I have no more charge of her : for very pity to see her lost I prayed you, in Canterbury, to find the means to send her home into her country ; now ye think that, with my letter of recommendation to the duchess of *Savoy*, she shall be content to take her into her service, this, Mr. Almoner, is not mete for her ; for she is so *pillous* a woman, that it shall be dangerous to put her in a strange house ; if you will do so much for me to make her go hence by the way, with the ambassador of the King my father, it should be to me a great pleasure and one that ye shall bind me to you more than ever I was. From hence I have nothing to write to you, but every body here is in good health, thanked be God, and the counsail very diligent in all things concerning the expedition of the King's Grace ; and ye will do so much to pray the King to be so good lord

as to write to them, that he is informed by me [*how*] so well every thing is done by them, that he is very well content thereat and give them thanks for it, bidding them so to continue. And with this I make an end on this day of July."

*Catharine of Arragon, Queen of England, to Wolsey.
(Orig. August 13. 1513.)**

" Master Almoner, I received both the letters by Copynger and John Glyn, and I am very glad to hear so [*how*] well the King passeth his dangerous passage I trust to God it shall so continue that ever the King shall have best on his enemies with as great honor as ever king had. Till I saw your letter I [*was*] troubled to hear [*how*] so near the King was to the siege of Trouenne but now I thank God ye make me sure of the good heed that the King taketh of himself, to avoid all manner of dangers. I pray you, good Mr. Almoner,

* Caligula, D. VI. 29.

remember the King always thus to continue, for with his life and health there is nothing in the world that shall come amiss, by the grace of God, and without that, I can see no manner of good thing shall fall after it, and being sure that ye will not forget this, I will say herein no more, but I pray you to write to me and though ye have no great matters, yet I pray you send me word the chief that it is to me from the King's own self. Ye may think, when I put you to this labour, that I forget the great business that ye have on hand; but if ye see in what case I am, that is without any comfort or pleasure unless I hear from him, ye will not blame me to desire you, though it be a short letter, to let me know from you tidings as often as may be, as my trusting dispatch unto you. From hence, I have no thing to write to you, but that ye be not so busy in this war, as we be here encumbered with it. I mean that

touching my own concerns, for going farther, where I shall not so often hear from the King. And all his subjects be very glad, I thank God, to be busy with the goff,* for they take it for pass-time ; my heart is very good to it and I am horrible busy with making standards, banners, and bagets. I pray God first to send there with you a good battail, as I trust he shall do, and with that every thing here shall go very well you to send me word whether you received the letters that I sent unto you to of the King my

* This passage evidently alludes to the popular game of goffe, of which the following account is given in Strutt's Sports and Pastimes :— “ There are many
 “ games played with the ball, that require the assist-
 “ ance of a club, or bat, and probably the most an-
 “ cient among them is the pastime now distinguished
 “ by the name of *goff*. In the northern parts of the
 “ kingdom, goff is much practised. It requires much
 “ room to perform this game with propriety : it an-
 “ swers to a rustic pastime of the Romans, which they
 “ played with a ball of leather stuffed with feathers,
 “ called *paganica* ; and the goff-ball is composed of
 “ the same materials to this day.”

father and what answer he gave you to it ; and with this an end. At Richmond the xiiij day of August.

“ CATHERINE.”

The most remarkable circumstance of this campaign, was, that Henry took into his pay the Emperor Maximilian, notorious for combining prodigality with meanness, and that he was lodged at an enormous expence in a tent of cloth of gold.* The royal camp was an ever-shifting scene of pomp and festivity. A herald was received on one day ; an embassy entertained the next ; excursions succeeded to skirmishes ; and Henry and his courtiers visited Maximilian’s daughter, Margaret, the Duchess Dowager of Savoy, who was also governess of the Netherlands : to crown all, he *defeated* the French, or rather *displaced* them, in the celebrated *Journée*

* The Emperor Maximilian was at once crafty and presumptuous, extravagant and rapacious, a baser counterpart of Ferdinand of Arragon.

des Esperons, or battle of the *spurs*; so called, because the enemy only spurred their horses to fly from the field. A victory, such as this, was little flattering to the descendants of those conquerors, who had immortalised the names of Cressy and Agincourt; but flattery and policy exaggerated its importance. *T'e Deum* was sung in the churches; bonfires blazed through the streets; the Emperor and the King reciprocated compliments; and Catharine, with grateful exultation, addressed to Wolsey the following letter, in which she is evidently impressed with reverence, for the dignity of the imperial soldier Maximilian.

*Catherine (of Arragon), Queen of England, to Wolsey, (Orig. after the Battle of the Spurs. August 25. 1513.) **

“ Master Almoner; what comfort I have with the good tidings of your letter I need

* Caligula, D. VI. 30.

not write it to you ; for the very account that I have sheweth it the victory hath been so great, that I think none such hath been seen before : all England hath cause to thank God of it, and I especially, seeing that the King beginneth so well, which is to me a great hope that the end shall be like. I pray God send the same shortly, for if this continue so still, I trust in Him that every thing shall follow thereafter to the King's pleasure and my comfort. Mr. Almoner, for the pains ye take remembering to write to me so often, I thank you for it with all my heart, praying you to continue still sending me word how the King doeth, and if he keep still his good rule as he began, I think, with the company of the *Emperor*, and with his good council his grace shall not adventure himself so much as I was afraid of before. I was very glad to hear the meeting of them both, which hath been, to my fancying, the greatest honor to the King that ever came

to prince. The Emperor hath done every thing like himself. I trust to God he shall be thereby known for one of the gallantest princes in the world, and taken for another man that he was before thought. Mr. Almoner, I think myself that I am so bound to him for my part, that in my letters I beseech the King to recommend me unto him; and if his grace thinketh that this shall be well done, I pray you to remember it. News from hence I have none, but such as I am sure the council have advertised the King of*, and thereby ye see. Almighty God helpeth here our part, as well as there. I trowe the cause is, as here say, that the King disposeth himself to him so well, that I hope all . . . shall be the better for his honour, and with this I make an end, at the xxv day of August.

“ G. KATHERINA.”

* Catharine alludes to the victory obtained by the Earl of Surrey at Flodden Field.

From this victory, of which Catharine's love magnified the importance, nothing resulted, but that Henry retreated towards Tournay, of which he obtained possession, merely it should seem, to give Wolsey a bishopric, and to prove, according to the Almoner's artful suggestion, that he could reduce to obedience a town, whose ancient inhabitants had resisted the arms of Cæsar. To these exploits succeeded a tournament, in honor of the governess of the Netherlands.* Jousting or feasting employed the day, dancing and masquing consumed the night; whilst Henry, elate with joy

* This princess was, in her childhood, contracted to Charles the Eighth, from whose court she was suddenly dismissed to make room for the marriage of that prince with Anne of Brittany. At the age of seventeen Margaret espoused the Prince of Castile, who dying in two years, she married the Duke of Savoy, and again became a widow, at one-and-twenty: from that period she is said to have protested against the surrender of her independence. The Netherlands prospered under her government, and she was certainly entitled to take place with the best statesmen of the age.

and vanity, took upon himself to enthrall Margaret, and Charles Brandon, (lately created Viscount Lisle,) in a mutual passion. Either from policy or inclination, the Duchess of Savoy was observed to lavish smiles and courtesies on the amiable cavalier ; but neither his birth nor station could sanction pretensions to the daughter of an emperor ; nor was the strong-minded Margaret likely to sacrifice prudence to love ; it may, therefore, be presumed, her attention was merely a political fiction, devised by her crafty father, or the more subtle Wolsey, who, perfectly aware of the mutual attachment subsisting between the favorite and the Princess Mary, had suggested this expedient to detach them from each other. By whatever agency the illusion was created, Brandon affected to become its dupe ; so willed his sovereign, who, however kind and indulgent on ordinary occasions, had been too long invested with power, not to require from his fa-

vorite unconditional obedience. Fortunately for the interests of his true passion, Henry, whom four months had sickened of war, no longer deferred his return to Richmond, where his Queen impatiently awaited his arrival, and where, if we may believe the chronicler, there was such a loving meeting, that it *rejoiced every one to behold*.* It is indeed somewhat singular, that under Catharine's delegated authority, Henry should have obtained the most brilliant and important victory that adorned his reign.

During his absence from England, James the Fourth of Scotland, a gallant † prince, married to his elder sister Margaret, had seized the opportunity to invade England,

* Hall.

† James the Fourth of Scotland was, in the language of chivalry, the devoted knight of Anne of Brittany, and was, in his political conduct, supposed to have been influenced by sentiments of romantic fidelity for a princess he had never beheld.

expecting, by this irruption, to promote the cause of his ally, Louis the Twelfth. After spreading terror and devastation through the northern counties he invested Norham castle, which was soon forced to capitulate ; and to arrest his progress, the gallant Earl of Surrey, supported by his two brave sons, the Lord Thomas, and Sir Edmund Howard, gave him battle on Flodden Field. To the invaders the day proved fatal : their army was routed ; their king slain ; his natural son, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, with several prelates, left dead on the field, and, in reality, the Scotch received a check, from which, during Henry's reign, they never perfectly recovered.

It is easy to imagine how much the recollections and the trophies of this glorious victory must have heightened the satisfaction with which Catharine welcomed back her lord and sovereign. Happily for her peace, she knew not with what ardent

admiration he had beheld the beautiful wife of Sir Gilbert Tailboys *, (governor of Calais,) the first acknowledged rival in her husband's affections. Henry was neither slow to acknowledge, nor unwilling to recompense the valour of his subjects. At a solemn festival, and in the presence of unnumbered spectators, he created the Earl of Surrey Duke of Norfolk; and having offered this proper tribute to the conqueror of James the Fourth, proceeded to dispense his favors, with somewhat more of liberality than discrimination, on the associates of his late expedition. In this chosen number, the most partially distinguished was Wolsey, advanced to the archbishopric of York, which he was per-

* This lady, the daughter of Sir John Blount, appears to have been one of the most beautiful and accomplished women of her time. After her husband's death she was notoriously the King's mistress, and had by him a son called Henry Fitzroy, born in 1519, created Duke of Richmond, in 1525. who died in 1537.

mitted to hold with the see of Lincoln. That Henry did not, however, overlook the favourites of a former age, was proved by the preferment of his chamberlain, Sir Charles Somerset Lord Herbert of Gower, who for his late conduct in France was created Earl of Worcester. Of this veteran courtier it is worthy of remark that, like Sir Charles Brandon, he had been the architect of his own fortune; having surmounted, by personal merit, the prejudices attached to illegitimate birth, and almost effaced the stigma which his mother's frailty had left on her honourable ancestry. His father, who was avowedly the Duke of Somerset, dying without heirs, the ambitious youth challenged from courtesy the recognition of his natural rights, by assuming the name of Somerset. This gallant spirit won the good will of Henry the Seventh, at whose court he was soon distinguished among the train of esquires, and expectant courtiers, as the object of his especial favor.

Raised to the dignity of a banneret, he obtained the hand of Elizabeth, the wealthy heiress of the Earl of Huntingdon; and on the demise of his father-in-law was exalted to the peerage by the style of Lord Herbert Baron Gower le Chevalier. From that period Sir Charles Somerset acquired a decided influence in the Council; and by his prudence and moderation endeared himself to the people. On the accession of Henry the Eighth, the citizens, by his mediation, presented petitions against Empson and Dudley; and to his persuasion was in part ascribed the resolution with which Henry commenced his reign, of redressing the grievances of the people. In the expedition against France, Somerset attended not merely in a civil but a military capacity; and, dismissing the sedate habits of the Lord Chamberlain, resumed the martial exercises of his youth, and emulated in ardor and bravery his juvenile compeers. The favorites and

statesmen of Henry's court were individually distinguished by some predominant quality. The Howards were characterised by magnificence, the Earl of Bedford by courtesy, Sir Charles Brandon by gallantry; whilst of Sir Charles Somerset the prevailing attributes appear to have been dignity and decorum; whilst this nobleman was proclaimed Earl of Worcester, for diligence and fidelity, Charles Brandon was created Duke of Suffolk, for the express purpose, as it should seem, of wedding the august governess of the Netherlands. Henry was still bent on promoting this alliance; but busy rumour whispered that his friend was more likely to win the beautiful Mary of England, than the ambitious Margaret of Savoy. In a tournament at Greenwich, however, the Duke chose a device, evidently alluding to his Flemish mistress. On this occasion, clad as a pilgrim, with a long silver beard, he exhibited a staff on which

was inscribed the motto of “ *Who can hold that will away ;*” and hence it was conjectured that he persevered with his suit, and that he anticipated a prosperous issue. With whatever feelings Mary might witness this ostentatious demonstration of her knight’s inconstancy, she had no alternative but to disguise her chagrin with the semblance of gaiety and good humour. It is, indeed, possible, that she gave little faith to the unwelcome conjecture ; and her marriage-treaty with the Prince of Castile being annulled, she might secretly exult in the conviction, that the man of her choice was not held unworthy of alliance with a lady whose birth and station were even more illustrious than her own ; but whatever hopes she might have cherished they were annihilated by a few strokes of the statesman’s pen. A treaty of peace was concluded with France, of which Mary was destined to become the unwilling gua-

rantee, and, at eighteen, constrained to pledge her faith to Louis, who had already completed his fifty-sixth year, and, from illness and infirmity, appeared to have prematurely reached the extremity of old age. Even Henry, though eager to secure to her a royal diadem, at first recoiled from the proposal ; but his scruples were obviated by the plausible suggestion of Wolsey, that Mary, if she survived Louis, would be at liberty to return to England, mistress of herself, and of her princely dower, not inferior to what had been settled on her predecessor, Anne of Brittany. The final ratification of this article by the French court removed every impediment to the marriage ; and the Duke of Longueville, who, since the campaign, had been detained a prisoner of war in England, was authorised to solemnise by proxy the auspicious espousals. Finding resistance unavailing, Mary submitted

quietly to her fate ; and Henry, who could not, without regret, part from a beloved sister, the sprightly playmate of his childhood, not only reiterated his solemn assurances that she should hereafter reclaim fraternal protection, but attempted to divert her chagrin by the magnificence of her bridal establishment. In these arrangements the ascendancy of the house of Howard was strikingly apparent : to the Duke of Norfolk was entrusted the guardianship of her person ; his two sons assisted in the charge ; Sir Thomas Boleyn was associated with the Bishop of Ely in the diplomatic department, and his daughter Anne, though scarcely seven years old, attached to the young queen's person, with the imposing title of Maid of Honor. Although this early introduction to court was justly considered as an especial favor to her family, it was a distinction often conferred on girls of illustrious birth, who, in being thus admitted to a royal household, were gra-

dually formed to the habits and duties of their vocation, and naturally acquired appropriate manners and sentiments to their adopted country. Exclusive of her personal attendants, Mary's retinue was swelled by a swarm of supernumerary volunteers, of whom many desired but to wear out life in a state of parasitical indulgence ; whilst others, disguising ambition under the mask of loyalty, expected, by pompous demonstrations of zeal for the honour of their beautiful Princess, to acquire undisputed title to her future patronage and protection. The spirit of adventure pervading the lower ranks of the community, was alike inimical to industry, probity, and independence. In them, such was the reverence for gentility, and such the passion for pomp and pageantry, that it was equally common for an individual to sink his whole property in the purchase of a pair of colours, or a suit of court-clothes ; to follow

the soldier of fortune ; or volunteer in some noble lord's or lady's train, with the doubtful chance of favor and preferment. The canopy of a royal bride was the banner to which idleness, profligacy, and vanity hastened to vow allegiance. Many sunk, and others mortgaged their whole property to procure an equipage suitable to the occasion ; others contracted debts on a perilous contingency, and abjured honesty, in renouncing independence. It may, indeed, be suspected, that independence was not to be appreciated by those whose distaste to serious and useful occupation was heightened by contempt for the duties of humble life, and avidity for the honors of a brilliant station.

The elevation of an English Princess to the throne of France, was an event of too much interest not to attract adventurers of every class to her standard ; and the bridal train of Mary, including, guards, domestics, and retainers, amounted to the alarming

number of three thousand followers, who were crowded together in the fleet appointed to conduct her to Boulogne.

It was on the 2d of October that she embarked at Dover, to which place she had been accompanied by Henry and Catharine. Her visible depression excited pity; and it was generally believed, that she would have preferred Charles Brandon and old England, to Louis and his crown.

The voyage, though brief, was rough and perilous; and the little fleet being separated by a tempest, the royal yacht alone reached the harbour of Boulogne, from whence a boat was launched for the Princess and her female attendants. When they approached land, the violence of the surf impeded their course; but from this irksome situation Mary was extricated by the gallantry of an English knight*, who,

* Sir Christopher Garnish.

plunging into the waves, bore her in his arms uninjured to the shore. Once landed, the unwilling guest was overwhelmed with homage and felicitation. The air resounded with shouts of joy ; and, sorrowful and exhausted as she really was, a sense of propriety extorted from her answering smiles, and expressions of complacency. At Boulogne, her train received a considerable augmentation, and at the head of the French nobility came the Duke of Angoulême, (the son-in-law of Louis,) afterwards so celebrated as Francis the First, hitherto distinguished only by his fondness for jousting and hunting ; his ardor in the pursuits of love and gallantry, his exuberant gaiety, and expensive, but not untasteful magnificence. Like Henry, Francis had received a learned education, but had not, like him, plunged into the muddy streams of theology and Thomas Aquinas. Imbued with the love of letters and the arts, he found leisure, amidst all his dissipation,

for classical poetry ; and in some measure atoned for his varnished vices by elegant libations to the muses. Naturally volatile and impetuous, he cherished a chivalrous sentiment of honor, which, in the absence of moral and religious principles, imparted to his character an occasional elevation and generosity the most imposing and attractive. It required all the gallantry for which he was pre-eminent, to greet with enthusiasm a woman who came to divest him of the title of Dauphin, and eventually, perhaps, to blast his long-cherished hopes of the French crown. Such, however, was the homage yielded to beauty, that, having once seen, he appeared but to live for her service. Under his escort she proceeded on her journey with more state than comfort. Attired in a robe and mantle of cloth of gold, she rode with ease and dignity a white palfrey, loaded with gilt trappings, and followed by thirty-six

ladies, attired and mounted in a style of similar magnificence.*

In the rear of this cavalcade came three chariots, (each not unlike a pleasure cart,) covered with purple velvet, and cloth of gold, judiciously provided for such as aspired not to be equestrians; in one of which, it may be presumed, sat the little Anne Boleyn. Behind these lumbering vehicles marched a gallant band of archers, habited in green, their bows and arrows slung, with an expression of mingled gaiety and impetuosity. The baggage-waggons that closed the rear might have suggested a comparison with the equipage of an oriental bride, or rather, with the onset of a royal crusade. The sumpter-mules announced plenty; music floated in the air, and a succession of sweet or martial strains soothed

* It may, however, be remarked, that the distinction of crimson damask, or cloth of gold, formed a criterion by which was ascertained the dignity of the rider.

the Princess, and enlivened her attendants; nor was the gallantry of the age without its influence in softening the fatigues of their pilgrimage: every lady rode between two cavaliers; and the Queen found, in the Duke of Angouleme, the most engaging companion. In this manner, on the second afternoon, they approached Abbeville, where Louis, who had anxiously awaited their arrival, was at length seized with such a paroxysm of impatience, that, forgetting his infirmities, he mounted his horse, and, at a little distance from the town, descried the unknown beloved. Little as Mary could have sympathised in the ardor of her aged lord, she well knew what was due to courtesy, and was no sooner apprised of his presence, than she made an effort to alight, to offer, as in duty bound, her obsequious homage; but the cumbersome ornaments of her dress cruelly impeded her movements. Perceiving her embarrassment, the gallant monarch, with

a glance expressive of surprise and admiration, turned his horse into another direction, and, satisfied that rumour had not exaggerated her charms, returned by a private road to Abbeville, pensive and solitary; not, perhaps, without some compunctious recollections of the moment when, to gratify his passion for Anne of Brittany, he had repudiated a blameless wife *, the daughter of his predecessor, and thus sullied with injustice and ingratitude an otherwise mild and beneficent reign. To Anne, indeed, he had been attached with a tenderness and truth rarely witnessed in their exalted station. Fidelity and harmony crowned their union; and he was plunged by her death into a melancholy

* Joan of France, the daughter of Louis XI., after her death canonised as a saint. Louis XII., when Duke of Orleans, had been enamoured of Anne Duchess of Brittany, who having been first married by troth to Maximilian of Austria, was eventually married by force to Charles VIII. of France.

that resisted all ordinary persuasives to consolation. In permitting his son-in-law to assume the title of Dauphin, he tacitly disclaimed the intention of forming a second marriage ; nor was it till policy suggested the expediency of an alliance with Henry, that he determined to take another partner to his throne, — submitting, in common with the object of his choice, to the authority of statesmen, and the supposed interests of the state : but his reluctance once vanquished, he was not insensible to the *eclât* of espousing the fairest princess in Europe, poor as was the solace, that reason permitted him to hope, from the association of a youthful beauty, whose tastes and propensities must be wholly unsuited to the habits and infirmities of his declining age. In the momentary glance that he exchanged with his new consort, he saw enough to justify the encomiums bestowed on her charms, but he saw also, with dismay, the number and splendor of her attendants ;

and, to prevent future disturbance, resolved to lose no time in ridding himself of such formidable intruders. On the morrow, the nuptials were solemnised in the church of St. Denis, with due pomp and ceremony ; a sumptuous banquet followed ; and, that nothing might be omitted to conciliate the young Queen, the most marked attentions were lavished on her English guests.* But, at the moment that Mary saw herself the idol of Louis, and the French court, where the nobility and the Duke of Angouleme

* By a document, preserved in Leland's Collectanea, it appears, that to each of the lords and gentlemen twenty days' wages were given in advance. The Duke of Norfolk was furnished with a hundred horses, with an allowance of five pounds per day ; for the Marquis of Dorset, (viz. eighty horses,) four pounds per day ; the Bishop of Duresme had sixty horses ; the Earl of Surrey, fifty-eight ; others of the nobility had thirty or twenty each : in addition to these, were eighteen bannerets and knights, with from twenty to twelve horses each : the esquires of the body had thirteen and four-pence per day ; exclusive of these, John Myclow headed fifty officers of the King's household.

were emulous in offering the incense of adulation, the most cruel mortification was inflicted on her feelings ; and the King, after a profusion of compliments, suddenly dismissed the whole English party*, protesting he could never sufficiently evince his gratitude for their care of his beloved consort Mary.

The emotions with which Mary received this intimation, may be more easily conceived than described ; and she has herself left a genuine transcript of her feelings, in the following letter†, addressed to Henry : —

* The ladies appointed to attend on the French Queen were the Lady Guildeford, the Lady Elizabeth Gray, daughter of the Marquis of Dorset, Mrs. Elizabeth Ferrers, and Mrs. Ann Boleyn. The latter was permitted to remain ; a favor, without doubt, conceded to the Duke of Norfolk, in consideration of her being his relation. In the document, preserved by Leland Anne is called M. Boleyn ; an inaccuracy which may have been supposed to lend some plausibility to the erroneous assertion of Sanders, that Mary Boleyn was the elder sister.

† Cotton Manuscripts.

“ My good brother ;

“ So heartily as I can, I recommend me to your Grace, admiring much that I have never heard from you, since my departing, so often as I have sent and written to you ; and now am I left heartless, alone, in effect ; for on the morn next after my marriage, my chamberlain with other gentlemen were discharged. In like wise [manner] my mother Guildeford *, with other my women and maid-servants, except such as never had experience or knowledge how to advise, or give me counsel in any time of need, which is to be feared more shortly than your Grace thought at the time of my departing, as my mother G. can more plainly show than I can write, to whom I beseech you to give audience, and if may be by any means possible, I humbly request you to cause my said mother G. to repair hither, once again ; for else if any chance hap, other than well,

* The Lady thus designated was the Lady Guildford, wife of Sir Henry Guildford.

I shall not know where nor of whom to ask any good counsel, to your pleasure, nor yet to mine own advantage. I marvel much that my Lord of Norfolk would at all times so lightly quit any thing at their request. I am well assured, that when ye know the truth of every thing, as my mother G. can show you, ye would full little have thought, I should have been thus intreated. Would to God my Lord of York had come with me, in the room of my Lord of Norfolk ; for then I am sure I should have been left much more at my heart's ease, than I am now, and thus I bid your Grace farewell, and more heart's ease than I have now. The 29th day of October.

“ These go to my mother Guildeford, of
your loving sister,

“ MARY, Queen.”

The dissatisfaction of Mary could not escape the observation of Francis, who, to divert her chagrin, caused a tournament to

be proclaimed, in honor of the nuptials, to which all the English nobility were freely invited ; and he rightly judged such visitors to be best calculated to soften her disappointment. In the mean while Louis dismissed the Queen's nobler attendants with magnificent presents ; but to the humbler and more necessitous part of her retinue, neither humanity nor policy prompted him to offer any compensation for a disappointment by which they were probably involved in beggary and ruin. Of the gay and gallant train, who had so lately followed in triumph their admired Princess, no vestige could be discerned in those miserably destitute beings, who returned like worn-out pilgrims from a disastrous crusade. There were some who never reached their country to relate their adventures in a foreign land ; many perished under the hardships they had to encounter in a journey from Abbeville to Calais or Dover—without money or other means of obtaining subsistence, and, if we may be-

lieve the chroniclers *, some *went mad* : such was the wretchedness entailed on those indigent retainers of the great, who lived but to swell the pomp, and emblazon the prodigality of their arrogant lords. It appears not whether Mary was perfectly aware of the misery she had innocently occasioned. She was perhaps occupied with more pleasing anticipations of joy and triumph. In France, as in England, the name of a tournament created general interest, and enthusiasm. The mutual jealousies subsisting between French and English knights, assumed on such occasions the high tone of patriotic sentiment, and the eagerness of personal emulation was exalted by a nice sense of national dignity and honor. The challenge of Francis was therefore received with transport by all who sighed for distinction, and possessed the indispensable requisites of a splendid suit, and a mettled courser. The Duke of Suffolk, too gallant to

* Hall. Speed.

he rich, belonged not to this happy number; but Henry loved him, and, wishing to obtain, in the person of his friend, that triumph which he could not challenge for himself, he readily furnished him with money for the costly enterprise. Not one moment was to be lost by the candidates for chivalric fame. Horses and men were hastily embarked; and the English party arrived in time to witness the ceremony of Mary's coronation, on the 5th of November, in the Abbey of St. Denis, when the Duke of Angouleme, with his wonted gallantry, held suspended over the young Queen's head the heavy Gothic crown, which might otherwise have crushed her beautiful tresses. On the following day she made her public entry into Paris, where, amongst other honors, she was met by three thousand persons belonging to religious communities, who, in France, appear to have mingled more freely than in England in public processions. On either side of this

fair pageant walked the French and English nobles, preceded by a formidable troop of Germans, and followed by the King's Scotch guard, who in those days were justly considered the satellites of royalty. The Queen was carried like an idol, in a chair of state, draped with cloth of gold, which was not suffered to conceal her person from the public gaze. On her head she wore a coronet of pearls ; her neck and bosom blazed with jewels. After this fatiguing ceremony, Mary was reconducted to her own apartments, and from thence to a sumptuous dinner and an overwhelming banquet. Finally, oppressed with compliments and congratulations, she had to preside at the midnight-ball, in which she could not but miss the gay exhilaration that her brother Henry was accustomed to infuse into those otherwise monotonous amusements. But the next day presented more interesting objects. It was the tournament in honor of her auspicious nuptials: nor could she re-

fuse to participate in the exultation of her countrymen, when, in the face of the first nobility of England and France, she was to maintain the proud pre-eminence of beauty, and receive the tribute of universal homage. The scene of pleasure was in the arena before the Bastile, in the Rue St. Antoine. A triumphal arch was there raised, emblazoned with the arms of France and England : beneath them were exhibited four targets; the first of gold, the second of silver, the third of ebon-black, the fourth of a tawney hue ; on which were inscribed the names and pretensions of the respective challengers.* Near the arch was erected a theatre, open on all sides, of which the most conspicuous part was occupied by the royal family. The Queen stood in front of the combatants ;

* He whose name was inscribed on the silver target was to tilt ; the gold intimated that he should run with sharp spears and fight with sharp swords ; the black shield denoted that the knight was to fight on foot with swords and spears for the one hand ; the tawney shield, that he should fight with a two-handed sword.

and, proudly conscious that she was herself the first object of attraction, continued with goddess-like port to dispense her lovely smiles, and display the most bewitching graces to her enraptured votaries. Whilst the much-envied Louis, reclining on a couch, with difficulty supported the fatigue of witnessing this scene of splendor, and was probably tempted to draw some unpleasant comparisons between the fascinating Mary, and her more companionable predecessor. During three days had the suffering husband to brook the dissonant sounds of mirth and acclamation. During three days the jousts continued with frightful vehemence; French and English knights contended like Greeks and Trojans, with unappeasable fury: on either side three hundred heroes entered the lists; some fell in the field; many were disabled for life; and Francis himself, severely wounded, was forced to quit the lists. Like Achilles, Brandon was every where the

successful combatant ; yet, on one occasion, even he seemed on the brink of destruction*, when, at the instigation, as was pretended, of Francis, he was encountered by some gigantic stranger, supposed to have been a German warrior : for a moment the issue of the combat was doubtful, and the Queen, by an involuntary emotion, betrayed her secret to Louisa, the intriguing mother of the Duke of Angouleme, who, naturally

* In Drayton's *Epistles* the following comparison is drawn between Brandon and the most accomplished cavaliers of the French court.

Alanson, a fine-timbered man and tall,
Yet wants the shape thou art adorn'd withal ;
Vendome's good carriage and a pleasing eye,
Yet hath not Suffolk's pleasing majesty ;
Courageous Bourbon, a sweet manly face,
But yet he wants my Brandon's courtly grace ;
Proud Longaville, our court judg'd hath no peer,
A man scarce made was thought, whilst thou wert
here :

Countie Saint Paul, a peerless man in France,
Would yield himself a squire to bear thy lance :
Gallas and Bonnearme, matchless for their might,
Under thy tow'ring blade have couch'd in fight.

judging her character by her own depraved heart, advised her son to watch all her future movements. Brandon triumphed ; but it was only to exchange with his royal mistress a brief farewell, and return to England incumbered with debt, and with forlorn hopes of redeeming the obligation.

The sufferings of Louis were probably abridged by the tournament ; he, at least, lingered but till the ensuing February, when he breathed his last. Mary was once more free ; but many princes might aspire to her hand, and Brandon's cause seemed desperate, since he could not woo, nor even approach his mistress, without risking his favor with a jealous sovereign. Fortunately this jealousy became his advocate ; believing that Francis would seek to inveigle his sister into a French marriage, Henry wrote to caution her against a clandestine connection ; and, to give more weight to his admonition, transmitted it by the Duke of Suffolk.

In the meantime Mary had written to remind her brother of his former promise to allow her to reside in England, indirectly claiming some recompense for her late obedience.* She protested against a foreign alliance, declaring, that rather than marry a second time any other than the object of her choice, she would retire to a monastery and renounce the world for ever. But this declaration was softened by another, in which, with the most touching expressions of sisterly regard, she added, "I think every day a thousand, till I shall again behold you, and know not in the world any so great comfort." It sometimes happens that honest simplicity baffles craft and cunning, and that a generous impulse of the heart removes obstacles which might have long resisted the efforts of ela-

* "I beseech your Grace (she writes) that you will keep all the promises you made when I took leave ; for your Grace knows I married for *your* pleasure *this* time."

borate policy. In an interview with the King of France, who had hoped to match her with the Duke of Ferrara, Mary frankly avowed the state of her affections; and, whether flattered by her confidence, or touched by her candor, he entered into her feelings, and cordially offered his mediation with the King of England. Reassured by his friendship, the Queen wrote to her brother, confessing, or at least hinting her love, and imploring his consent to her happiness.* Henry's answer was neither prompt nor decisive; and it appeared but too probable that her hopes might again be sacrificed to the machinations of Wolsey and his ambitious sovereign. According to etiquette, a queen-dowager of France was expected to con-

* "On Tuesday, late at night, the French king came to visit me, and after many fair words, demanded of me whether I had made any promise of marriage in any place; assuring me, upon the word and honor of a prince, that if I would explain, he would do for me to the best of his power."— See Original Letters.

sume two livelong months in a chamber hung with black, debarred from all customary recreations and amusements, and surrounded but by objects the most solemn and lugubrious. In admitting her lover's visits, Mary certainly infringed this rigid rule of widowhood ; but her resistance was fortified by the suggestion of Francis, who strongly urged the necessity of her taking a decisive step to ensure her future tranquillity : emboldened by these counsels, she no longer hesitated to obey the dictates of her own heart ; and, under his auspices, was privately united to Charles Brandon five months after she had left England, a magnificent but unwilling bride. In these second nuptials, a striking contrast was presented to the proud but heartless pageantry of her former marriage. The ceremony was performed with the utmost privacy and simplicity in the Abbey of Clugny. Mary looked for no homage ; she was greeted with no acclamations ; but she

listened to the promises of hope ; she indulged anticipations of felicity ; she had no longer to complain of the too ponderous crown, received without joy and resigned without regret. But in renouncing the vanities of her sex, she had obtained no exemption from its fears ; and, however encouraged by Francis, or sanctioned by the example of her sister Margaret, who, since her husband's death, had condescended to espouse the Earl of Angus, she was unable to divest herself of ominous forebodings ; and dreaded lest Henry should punish her temerity by inflicting some signal mark of displeasure on the object of her affection. To avert this calamity, she wrote again, frankly confessing her own delinquency, and exonerating Brandon : she admitted that she had been half the wooer, and that it had required all her influence to induce him to infringe his duty ; that she had protested she must be won in four days, or never seen

again; that she had even refused to return to England, if he declined becoming her husband. In extenuation of her own conduct, she avowed her apprehension lest the King's privy council should oppose her unequal marriage; finally, she threw herself on his mercy, pathetically beseeching him to save her from unspeakable misery and desolation: "and now," she adds, "that your Grace knoweth both the offences of which I alone am the occasion, most humbly, and as your most foul sister, I request you to pardon our offences; and that it will please your Grace to write to me and the Duke of Suffolk some few gentle words, for that is the greatest comfort."

All the impetuosity of Henry's nature burst forth at this clandestine proceeding; but he could not forget that Suffolk had been his early friend; he could not refuse to listen to Francis, who, equally from policy and inclination, was become his sister's advocate. It may, however, be doubted whether that

mediation would have prevailed, had it not been seconded by Wolsey's powerful interest, and by the consolatory reflection, that it was better his sister's dower should devolve on one of his own subjects than on a foreign prince, over whom he could claim no allegiance. Influenced by these considerations Henry graciously invited Mary and her husband to return to England, where their nuptials were again solemnised with suitable pomp and festivity.* It

* In 1515. The May-game, described by Hall, this year, appears to have possessed unusual elegance. The King, and the two Queens, and their respective attendants, were met at Shooter's Hill by two hundred of the King's guard, all habited in green ; one of whom, under the assumed name of Robin Hood, asked permission to show his archery : permission being granted, he whistled, and all his men at once discharged their arrows. Again, and again, the same feat was performed ; when Robin Hood invited the royal party to come to the Green Wood and see how outlaws lived : consent was given, and then the horns blew, till they came to an arbour, made of boughs, with a hall, and a great inner chamber, strewed with flowers and sweet herbs, which the King much praised. Then said Robin Hood, — “ Sir, outlaws' breakfast is venison, and there-

is worthy of remark, that at the tournament which was expressly held in honor of his bride, the Duke of Suffolk exhibited an ingenious device, delicately alluding to the circumstance which had brought him within the pale of royalty. To the trappings of his horse, which were one half cloth of gold, and the other cloth of frieze, was appended the following motto : —

Cloth of gold, do not despise,
 Tho' thou art match'd with cloth of frize;
 Cloth of frize, be not too bold,
 Tho' thou art match'd with cloth of gold.*

fore you must be content with such fare as we use." Then the King and court sat down, and were served with venison and wine, to their great contentation. On their return, they were met by two ladies, a chariot drawn by five horses, on each of which rode some allegorical female, and in the car appeared Flora and May, who saluted the King with goodly songs; and so brought him to Greenwich, in the sight of the people, to their great joy and solace.

* See Percy's Reliques, Sir William Temple's Miscellanies.

Thus happily terminated the trials of Mary; and, what is extraordinary, it does not appear she had ever cause to repent of her romantic attachment; and, amidst the blandishment of a court, of which to her last moments she continued to form the brightest ornament, she was still distinguished as the devoted wife, and tender mother.

CHAPTER III.

LETTERS AND EMBASSIES OF SIR THOMAS BOLEYN.

— THE MEETING OF FRANCIS AND HENRY IN
THE PLAINS OF GUISNES.

THE departure of Mary from France altered not the destination of Anne Boleyn. By the mediation of her former mistress she was transferred to the wife of Francis, the virtuous Claude, whose court, formed on the model of that established by her mother, Anne of Brittany, was crowded with boys and girls, pages and maids of honor. It had been the pride of that princess to render her palace a seminary of instruction for the young female nobility; and, with a munificence worthy of her rank, she not only admitted, but invited to her protection, all who could authenticate their claims to honorable lineage. According to Brantome, three hundred girls

were thus enrolled among her pupils, and half that number included in her retainers and attendants, some of whom received no salary, but lived at the Queen's expense *, in apartments remote from those allotted to the other sex, with whom they were seldom permitted to associate.† It has been remarked, that she loved power, and affected state, and never went, even to chapel, unattended by the royal guards. In her female satellites she introduced pageantry of a more pleasing cast : wherever she moved, youth and beauty heralded her approach, and a succession of blooming girls filed through the spacious apartments, alternately to enliven the dull labours of tapestry, or to lend attrac-

* Brantome states that some of these young ladies received twenty-five livres per annum ; and the salary being generally regulated by the age of the parties, children might sometimes be preferred on the principle of economy.

† See Brantome, one of whose near relations was educated under her auspices.

tion to the noisy pleasures of the tournament.

The reputation of Claude, like that of her predecessor, was without blemish: chaste, pious, and superstitious, she required from her ladies correct principles and decorous manners. But this princess possessed neither her mother's beauty nor talents; and it was her fortune to be united to a man who requited her tenderness and obedience with neglect and contempt. Timid, gentle, and affectionate, she neither upbraided his infidelities nor resented his indifference. Ill health was added to her afflictions; and, whilst Francis was alternately engaged in war, in hunting, or in gallantry, Claude lived in seclusion from all public amusements, occupied with her children or absorbed in her devotions, and apparently rather enduring than enjoying existence. Under such a mistress, the maids of honor, if they had few pleasures, had also few tempta-

tions ; and the French court, which in the latter period of this reign was destined to become the seat of voluptuous vice, appears to have been at that time the school of modesty and virtue. It may, perhaps, be asked, what services were required of Anne Boleyn, and how far her situation was calculated to promote her father's favorite object, that of forming in his daughter an elegant and accomplished woman ? The maids of honor appear to have been always considered rather as ornamental than useful : neither serious charge, nor weighty responsibility was ever imposed on these fair ministers of royalty, whose business it was, like nymphs, to encircle their queen only to shed around her the ineffable charm of grace and beauty. Accustomed to attend on all public exhibitions of state and splendor, to dress with taste, to move with elegance, comprised their most important duties : their accomplishments, if any they possessed, were reserved for the

recreation of her private hours, when, according to her humour, they were required to sing, dance, work, and pray ; alternately associated in her labours and devotions. Finally, their conduct was closely inspected by an elderly *governante*, whose duty it was to maintain amongst them strict order and decorum. In the absence of schools and other seminaries of instruction, an establishment such as this must have offered some equivocal advantages to childhood, and few attractions to youth : to the former it might supply habits of docility and application, of promptitude, and self-possession, eminently useful in the intercourse of after-life ; nor was it a defect peculiar to the education received in a court, that it blasted, by a specious semblance of maturity, the artless simplicity of childhood. Amongst other vices inherent in the system of manners derived from the feudal institutions, it was not the least, that it abridged what is usually esteemed the best

and happiest season of human existence : the cheerfulness of infancy was soon clouded with care. At four years of *age the sons of the nobility commenced their studies ; at six they were initiated into the Latin grammar ; at twelve they were introduced into company ; at fourteen they exhausted their strength in hunting ; at sixteen they were exercised in jousting ; and at eighteen they were boldly ushered into public life. The education of girls was still more perniciously opposed to simplicity and nature ; from the earliest period, they appear to have been taught to imitate the manners, and even to adopt the dress, of grown women : at thirteen they were not only disfigured by the stiff costumes, but infected with the pride, the vanity, and folly of their elder associates. From the moment that they were allowed to assume

* See Hardinge's Chronicle ; which, though written under Henry the Sixth, describes the customs prevalent in subsequent reigns.

their place at the tournament, they affected to dispense smiles and favors on real or pretended votaries ; and whilst, glittering with gold and jewels, they began to expatiate on the reciprocal duties of the mistress and the servant, they learnt to envy the distinctions conferred by the bold successful champion, and to sigh for the sovereignty conceded to peerless beauty.

Of the elementary education of Anne Boleyn, little is known, and nothing detailed ; but it is impossible not to suspect that it must have been calculated rather to foster pride and vanity, than to exercise the sympathies, or create the habits of domestic life. From the cradle, she had been an object of peculiar attention ; her beauty attracted notice ; her quick parts, and graceful demeanor, called forth spontaneous admiration. It is traditionally recorded, that even her promising childhood gave some presage of greatness ; and in this, as in other instances, the prediction might con-

tribute to its own accomplishment. All her impressions, all the associations of her opening mind were calculated to create or to cherish ambitious sentiments; dreams of splendor floated around her infant head; and whilst she was taught to lisp the illustrious pedigree of the Howards, she learnt also to contemplate, with reverence, the portraits of her father's maternal ancestors, and to unravel the complicated genealogies of the Botelers or Butlers, and Ormonds, many of whom had consecrated, on the scaffold, their fidelity to the house of Lancaster; nor could it be to her a matter of indifference, that the very roof under which she first saw the light, had been tenanted by more than one royal personage. The manor of Rochford was originally conveyed by Henry the Second to a Norman knight, who assumed with it the title of Baron Rochford. Under Edward the Third, this family becoming extinct, the lordship of Rochford, with its stately mansion, was

transferred to William Bohun, Earl of Northampton, from whose descendants it passed by marriage to Thomas of Woodstock, and, from want of male heirs, reverted to the crown. A royal grant conferred it on Boteler, Earl of Ormond, afterwards created Earl of Wiltshire ; but this nobleman was the victim of his devotion to the Red Rose, and Rochford Hall, once more bereaved of its lord, came into the possession of an illustrious lady, Anne, Duchess of Exeter, who received it from her brother, Edward the Fourth. By this bigoted Princess it was bestowed on the church ; but, during that tempestuous period, even the church held its possessions by a precarious tenure ; and Rochford Hall was granted to Earl Rivers, the father of the celebrated Elizabeth Woodville, whom Edward raised to the throne. It would be fanciful to suggest that this passage in the traditional chronicle * of Rochford Hall might

* Morant's *ENSEX.*

have operated powerfully on Anne Boleyn's future character. It is, however, certain, that the romantic fortunes of the widowed beauty must have been associated with her earliest recollections; and there is a remarkable coincidence in the answer which each heroine gave to the solicitations of her royal suitor, — "I am too good for your mistress, and not worthy to become your Queen." Another circumstance, trivial in itself, might inflame an aspiring temper. Anne recalled, with her name, that of a Princess, the daughter of the chaste Elizabeth, who had actually espoused her mother's brother, the high-spirited Lord Thomas Howard. With whatever avidity she might listen to these nursery-tales of hereditary honor, she was rather stimulated than discouraged by her aspiring parents, with whom pride and ambition must have completely prevailed over nature and tenderness, since they parted without reluctance from this engaging child, whose happiness and im-

provement they surrendered to the care of strangers.

From the moment that she entered Mary's suite, Anne was devoted to a life of honorable servitude—an irksome, though splendid captivity, in which it probably became her pastime, or her solace, to enact, in fancy, the part of a royal bride, and anticipate the raptures that awaited an idolized Queen. In her personal qualities she had a passport to affection;—frank, sprightly, and graceful, she constantly delighted her teachers, and surpassed her competitors. Her literary acquirements were not remarkable; but it may be presumed that, in common with the Princesses of France and England *, she had made some proficiency in the Latin language: she excelled in music, singing, dancing, and all those lighter accom-

* Dr. Thomas Linacre, the first president of the College of Physicians, instituted by Henry the Eighth, was preceptor to Mary Queen of France, and composed a grammar for her use.

plishments suited to her sex and station. Female cultivation was not in vogue, till the example of Sir Thomas More determined Henry the Eighth to imbue his daughters with solid learning; and as, with Sir Thomas Boleyn, it was the first object of solicitude to see his children brilliant and attractive, he eagerly embraced the opportunity of giving Anne those more elegant accomplishments which were then almost exclusively to be acquired in France. She was, however, doomed to consume a large portion of her time in the monotonous occupation of the needle, and, with other patient victims, to pore over the mazes of interminable tapestry. The sombre aspect of Claude's court might, perhaps, have checked her native buoyancy of spirits, but for the genial influence diffused by Margaret, the Duchess of Alanson.* This

* Afterwards Queen of Navarre. She composed a volume of poems called *La Marguerite des Marguerites*, comprising hymns, spiritual songs, and sprightly col-

princess, the beloved sister of Francis the First, was learned and ingenious; inheriting her mother's talents without her vices, and participating in all her brother's finer qualities, unalloyed by their opposing follies: mild and magnanimous, with courage for every trial, and resources for every emergency, she devoted her leisure to letters and the arts, and was alternately a lover and a votary of the muses. Delighting in the pleasures of conversation, she drew to her circle men of wit and learning, and found in the collision of kindred minds an intellectual gratification far superior to the contemplation of broken lances, and prancing steeds, or the mummary of

loquies in verse, called comedies, and which in some degree approximate to the *dramatic proverbes*, so popular in French and Spanish literature. She produced also *Les Cent Nouvelles*, a work which appears to have been highly esteemed by her contemporaries. — Most of these tales are said to have been composed in her travelling litter, to beguile the irksomeness of a fatiguing journey.

masques and pantomimes. From her taste for liberal discussion, and the independence of her opinions, she incurred the charge of being well affected to the Lutheran controversy; but these first prepossessions, if they ever existed, were probably counteracted by the influence of Francis, who had sufficient penetration to discover the intimate connection between civil and religious liberty; nor is it improbable that Margaret was herself too much of a latitudinarian, to enter with ardor into the controversies of novel sects, or erratic sectaries.* It is generally allowed, that she never quitted the pale of the Catholic church, although she neither dissembled her conviction of its errors, nor disguised her contempt for its corruptions. In reality Margaret was a *femme d'esprit*, better fitted to appreciate a *bon mot*, than

* Francis deprecated the new sects, as hostile to existing governments. "My sister," said he, "loves me too well, not to be of that religion which is most useful to the state."

to discuss a theological dogma. To the last hour of her life she continued to inveigh against the pope, and to attend high mass, — to laugh at penances and absolution, yet admit a confessor, and occasionally fast like a rigid devotee. From such inconsistency the strongest mind is not exempted, when to the power of reason is opposed the influence of habit and sympathy, and all those nameless feelings and associations created in infancy, which form so large a share in the sum of every human character. But whatever might be Margaret's religious opinions, she was unquestionably the patroness of scholars, letters, and the arts ; the friend of poets, scholars, and philosophers. Nor can it be doubted that Anne Boleyn derived incalculable advantage from her early intercourse with one of the most brilliant women of the age ; but her attachment to the Reformation, so often attributed to this princess, had probably a different

source, and was not inspired till a much later period.

During the eight years that Anne Boleyn resided in France, she appears to have had several opportunities of seeing her father, whose official duties conducted him to Paris. It is well known, that an embassy was not then intrusted to any single individual, however eminent or approved ; but composed of several distinguished men, whose numerous retinue displayed all the pomp of royal magnificence. In 1518, Francis sent to Henry the Bishop of Paris and Admiral Bonnivet, accompanied by four-score noblemen, whose suite, amounting to the enormous number of twelve hundred persons, excited in the populace surprise, not unmixed with displeasure ; from the court, however, they experienced a most gracious reception. The Earl of Surrey, at the head of the English nobility, met their party on Blackheath *, when

* Hall.

every English gentleman gave his arm to a French cavalier ; and in this amicable manner they walked two-and-two till they reached London ; where the admiral was lodged in Merchant-taylor's Hall, and his attendants hospitably entertained by the principal citizens. The ostensible pretext of this embassy was a contract of marriage between two children still in the cradle, — the Dauphin, or, as he was called, the *Dolphin*, of France, and Mary Princess of England : its real object was the restitution of Tournay to France, which its monarch hoped to obtain by flattering Henry, and bribing Wolsey ; but all political objects, whether real or fictitious, appear to have been absorbed in two splendid entertainments successively given by the Cardinal and the King to their foreign guests ; and it is worthy of remark, that the first was an evening party, approaching, in elegance and refinement, to the style of modern manners ; whilst the latter was marked by

a mixture of pedantry, epicurism and gorgeous mummary which by prescriptive right still maintained their place at court, in defiance of the King's better taste. *

* It commenced in the morning, with an oration from Dr. Tunstall, and ended at midnight with a banquet. After a sumptuous dinner, which might have required Ajax-like powers of digestion; the ambassadors were conducted to Whitehall, where stood a rock crowned at the summit with five emblematical trees; of which the first, an olive, bore the shield of Papal Rome; the second, a pineapple designated Austria; the third, a rose-bush, was the symbol of England; on the fourth, a branch of lilies, were suspended the arms of France; the fifth, a pomegranate, supported those of Spain. By this pageant was verified the mystic union supposed to be formed against the Turks, the common enemies of Christendom. In compliment to the espousals, a lady was exhibited on the rock, supporting in her lap a *dolphin*, a troop of knights and ladies issued from a cavern, and to a tourney succeeded a masque and dancing. For the accommodation of the foreign guests, an extra personage was judiciously introduced, who, in the vague character of *Report*, very obligingly explained, in French, the meaning (if any there were) of this puerile pastime. After this a banquet was served, at which stood a cupboard of twelve stages, consisting of two hundred and sixty dishes.

Henry piqued himself too much on the punctilios of courtesy, not to offer a suitable return for the complaisance of Francis. Early in 1519, an embassy proceeded to France, of which the Bishop of Ely and the Earl of Worcester were the

The scene of the Cardinal's entertainment was York House. After a solemn banquet at which the ladies and gentlemen were placed in alternation; the company were saluted by minstrels, with whom commenced the masquerades: other visitors followed in disguise, by whom cards and dice were introduced: and after a game of mumchaunce, the minstrels struck up, and in came twelve gentlemen disguised, with as many ladies: the first was the King himself, leading the French Queen; the second the Duke of Suffolk and Lady Daubeney, the Lord Admiral Howard and Lady Guilford, Sir Francis Brian and Lady Elizabeth Blount; after them twelve knights disguised bearing torches. All these thirty-six persons were dressed in green, and danced together. The ladies wore tires made of braids of damask gold, with long hairs of white gold. All these masquers danced at one time: at length their vizors were discarded; and the ambassadors recognizing the King, returned him hearty thanks for his courtesy.

ostensible chiefs, but in which Sir Thomas Boleyn was destined to be the efficient personage. They were received with singular respect; and that nothing might be wanting to their satisfaction, a banqueting-house was constructed within the walls of the Bastile, where night after night was spent in music and dancing, feasting, and revelry. Sir Thomas Boleyn had afterwards to take a journey into Champagne, for the express purpose of seeing the infant dauphin, of whose health and comeliness he transmitted a most favorable report. On his return to Paris, affairs of more importance engrossed his attention : he had in reality to perform a complicated task, since he was not only the King's ambassador, but the agent of his minister, the emissary and confidant of Wolsey.

To explain this circumstance, it is necessary to revert to the two contingencies which in that age excited the strongest interest in Europe, — the nomination of a

pope, and the election of an emperor. One of these critical moments was now eagerly anticipated, from the approaching dissolution of Maximilian. Among the candidates for the imperial crown, Francis and Charles of Castile were the most prominent personages. Nor was it possible that Henry should remain a passive spectator of the contest : his first impulse had been to grasp the envied diadem to himself ; the next to secure it to his nephew Charles ; but Wolsey, for whom Francis had lately procured a Cardinal's hat, suspended his purpose, until he should have ascertained which of the two competitors would be most competent, to secure his own elevation to the papal chair — that dignity which was henceforth to be the ultimate object of all his political intrigues and versatile speculation. Could Wolsey have recalled the waking dreams of his humble youth, he might have recoiled with momen-

tary terror from the gigantic phantom which now filled his imagination. A few years since, to have possessed an episcopal see might have contented his utmost wishes : he had now three bishoprics, exclusive of the archiepiscopal see of York ; the Great Seal of England was committed to his hands ; and by the Pope's authority, he had lately assumed the controul of a legatine court, which invested him with absolute supremacy in cases of ecclesiastical jurisdiction ; yet Wolsey was not satisfied ; for there still remained in St. Peter's chair a pinnacle of solitary pre-eminence that could alone appease his restless ambition ; and he panted for the moment when he should no longer be the favorite, but the ruler, of kings, and the sacred arbiter of Europe. In cherishing these dreams of grandeur, it is but just to acknowledge that he imbibed a spirit of princely munificence. In some degree his vices were emblazoned

by his genius; and, like another Leo, he drew to his palace men of kindred talents; patronised the useful and ornamental arts; encouraged and protected scholars and authors; founded schools and colleges; and in part atoned for his ostentation and arrogance by acts of liberality and beneficence.* The *regeneration* of the Catholic church was one of Wolsey's great projects; and, with the zeal of a reformer, he instituted a rigid inquisition respecting monasteries, discouraged the monastic life, and unintentionally furnished a precedent for the future suppression of religious orders. Above all, in disseminating instruction for youth,

* Erasmus mentions, with praise, the scholars and divines domesticated at his table; his chaplains were all learned men. Wolsey founded several colleges and schools, and suppressed, at his first visitation, many religious houses. Amongst other useful societies, of which he was the founder or the protector, the College of Physicians was, by his influence, embodied under Henry the Eighth.

this self-created pope accelerated the progress of that reformation, which he most deprecated, and most desired to suppress.

With what precise views Wolsey persisted in seeking the papacy, it is now useless to enquire, and futile to conjecture. Among other schemes, he is said to have entertained the idea of combining, in a confederacy against the Turks, all the powers of Christendom, and perhaps redeeming the city of Constantine from Mahometan thralldom. For the present, it was sufficient that he desired to render himself independent of a young capricious prince, whose favor could alone be kept, as won, by submission and adulation.

Amongst the confidential agents, to whom his interests were intrusted, it may seem strange, that he should have selected Sir Thomas Boleyn, the son-in-law of the Duke of Norfolk, who had been among the first to rebuke his arrogance, and was

not the last to experience his resentment.

At the commencement of his career, Sir Thomas Boleyn had aspired but to be a courtier: to this character he now added that of a statesman; and it required no extraordinary effort of sagacity to discover, that the King's favorite was greater than the first peer in England, and that, should the house of Howard stand or fall, no better friend could be found than the oracle of his sovereign. It is, however, but just to remark, that, in becoming Wolsey's agent, he was neither his minion nor his sycophant, and that in political transactions, he extorted esteem by his honorable punctuality, opposing discretion to craft; to vacillation, firmness; and to treachery, fidelity. Without shining parts, he maintained his ground against eminent men; and without literary talents, acquired the reputation of a scholar, and the respect due to a patron

of letters. More cautious than enterprising, he appears to have been considered as the safety-valve of every treaty or negotiation in which he assumed a part; and, as prudence prompted the suggestions, success commonly crowned the efforts, of Sir Thomas Boleyn.* In the embassy to France (in 1519) he was chosen by Henry to adjust with Francis the ceremonial of his intended interview with that prince, in Picardy, and authorised to amuse him with fair professions respecting the imperial election. At the same time, he was commissioned by Wolsey to ascertain the intentions and abilities of the French monarch, in recommending a candidate to the papal see. The difference of these objects is distinctly traced in a regular correspondence which the ambassador continued with Henry and Wolsey; and in

* See Loyd's Worthies. But the character is exaggerated. — Sir Thomas Boleyn is also celebrated by Erasmus,

which, some few subjects of national interest, such as the indemnity of English merchants, or the security of the English flag, are occasionally introduced, in such a manner as plainly shows they were considered of minor importance.

The two following letters, written by Sir Thomas Boleyn, on the same day, to the King and the Cardinal, coincide in exemplifying the elegant gallantry of Francis, and in describing the mixture of rudeness and magnificence that characterised his court : —

“ *Paris, March 14. 1519.* *

“ To the King. †

“ Pleasyth it yo’ highnesse to understand that yesterday I delivered yo’ letter to the king here, w^h as harty and effectuous

* Cotton MSS. Caligula, D. VII. 48.

† In these letters, the more uncouth peculiarities of the old orthography are corrected.

recomendacions from your grace as I could devise; and after he had at length and w^h good playsure read over yo^r said letter, I declared to him, for my credence, according to the instruccions which yo^r grace late sent me, first the effect of yo^r sa^d letter. And after I shewed him how great desire yo^r grace hath for the increase of his hono^r, and what pleasure and consolation yo^r highness taketh in the same, considering the unfeyned amity and alliance that is established betwixt you both, which yo^r grace believeth to be so rooted in yo^r hearts, that what high honor or advancement shall fortune to come to him, the fruit thereof shuld re-donde to yo^r highnesse; wherefor to advance him to the preferment of this imperial dignitie, yo^r grace, upon knowledge of his further intent and mind, shal be glad to employe y^rself, as well by word and writing, as by acts and deeds, to the best of your power, whereupon he may assuredly

trust ; whereunto he, taking of his bonett, thanked heartily yo^r highnesse, and sayd that the great love and favor which he well perceiveth that yo^r grace bearyth towardes him is the greatest comfort that he hath upon earth, and for the great hono^r that yo^r grace sheweth to him in advancing him to the imperiall dignitie, which is his most desire, he saith he knoweth not how nor by what meanes he may recompence yo^r highnesse in doing any thing so moch for yo^r grace, but he sayeth, as long as he liveth, in any thing that he may doo that shal be to yo^r pleasure, he shall always be as ready and as glad to do it as he would be to do for himself, and desireth no thing more than to have knowledge wherein he might employe himself to do yo^r highnesse some pleasure. Rehcarsing to me that by the reason of the perfecte love and aliaunce betwixt you both, he reckoneth yo^r highnesse to be of great might and power, saying that what with yo^r owne puis-

sance and with his help, which he saith yo^r grace shall alwayes have ready at yo^r commandment, there is neither honno^r, dignitie, nor other thing in Chrystendome, but that yo^r highnesse shall attain and order it at yo^r own pleasure, and told me that he could not expresse to meet with his tongue the due thanks that he giveth y^r g^{cc} in his heart, for the loving kindnesse that he found in yo^r highnesse, and sayd that when ye both mete, which he trusts shall be shortly, your grace shall knowe his hart, no man lyving better ; whereunto I sayd that yo^r highnesse thanked him specially, causid that amongs all his other things and great affaires, he is so much desirous to meet, visit, and see yo^r grace, and told him of your conformable mind thereunto, shewing to him the time, place, and manner as is at length expressed in the instruccions that I ha whereunto he said that he is determined to see yo^r grace, though he should come but himself, his page, and his

lacquey, and that no business shall lette it : how be it, for the time, place, and order of the meeting, he said he would commune w^t the great master, and wⁱⁿ ij or iij dayes he wold send him to Paris, where he should make me answer of every article concerning the said entreview and meeting ; and because that the Quene here hath been very sicke thies ij dayes, and in great daunger ; as I have more at large written of the same to my Lord Legat and Cardinall of England, which I know sure woll shewe yo^r grace thereof. I can as yet have no answer what order shal be taken for the marchaunts matiers. Beseching the Holy Trinity long to preserve yo^r highnesse. From Paris this xiiijth day of March.”

“ *Paris, March 14. 1519.**

“ Pleaseth it yo^r grace to understand, that the xith day of this month I wrot to your grace my last letters, and the same day at

* Cotton MS. Caligula, D. VII. 47.

afternoon the queen here and my lady * took thier journey and went in horse-litters from hence to have gone towardes Saint Ger-mayn, vi leagues out of this towne, where is prepared for her to be in chyld bedde ; but the same after noon by the way the queen was so troubled with sickness, that she was fain to take her lodging at a very small village ii leagues out this towne, which is called La Porte de Neilly ; and that night she was in great danger, insomuch as word came to this towne the next morning that she was dead, and soon after the bruit ran through all this town, that she was delivered of a son, but neither is true : this caused me that I went not to the court on Saturday, as I was appointed, w' the great master ; but yesterday, the king knowing that I had letters to him, sent for me to come to him thither, where I saw the king's lodging, and the quene's, and my lady, the king's mother, and the Duchesse

* Louisa, Duchess of Angouleme, the mother of Francis.

of Alaunsons, and the great masters at the village above said, God knoweth, full poorly lodged, but that it is well dressed with good stuffs. The great master hath no chimney in his chamber, but there is a great oven, and this order is taken for the quene, that if she may have health to be conveyed by water from this village to Saint Germain, she shall be had thither, and close barges with chambers made in them be ordained for that purpose: if not, by force she must remayn and be delivered there ; as she shall do, I shall send yo^r grace word.

“ And whan I came to La Porte de Neilly, wherc at my coming the king was at dinner, and the great master had dined, the great master took me by the arm, and led me in to a little low house, where the king dyned, and as soon as he rose from dinner he came to me, and bad me to come wth him, into his bed-chamber, for a lowe there was too many folks. So I went to his

chamber, with him, the great master, and Robert, and no more, where I delivered the king's letters, and had answers of the same, as by a letter that I this tyme adressyd to the king's highnesse your grace may perceiue. That doon, I delivered to him a letter from y^r grace, with humble recomendacions as I could devise, and told him half, that next vnto the king's highnesse yo^r grace would always do vnto him above all other princes the honourable service and pleasure that may lie in your power, and as much ye shall tender his exaltation, weale, and suretie, as any other shall do, as by experience he shall right well perceiue.

“Whereto he answered me, that he knew by experience the good will and fauour that yo^r grace beareth to him in his affaires, and said that yo^r grace was the first that ever he counselled with for this alliance, which by yo^r great wisdome and policy, hath taken so great travaill and pain

for him that it is to his great honnor and comfort, and the weal of him and all his subjects. And he beseeching yo' grace that ye will let for no pains but as ye have begun that it woul please you so to continue, and on his behalf, he saith your grace shall not find him towardes you ingrate nor forgetful, and sayeth that in recompence of that ye have done for him, and trusteth will do for him, and for the singular love and favour which he beareth to you, considering that ye be a man of the church and one of the greatest and most principal, he saith, he thinketh, it is in the king's highnesse and in him to do you most good, which he promiseth by the word of a king to do for yo' grace, if it please you to accept it ; and thus he hath desired me to write to you, that if it please you to pretend to be the head of the church, if in case any thing shuld fall of the Pope, he sayeth, he will assure you first xiiij cardinalls for him ; also, of the compaynes which be in de-

vision, the Colonnas and the Ursinas at Rome, he will assure you the whole company of the Ursinas ; he reckoneth also a great help of one he calleth a valiant man, and of great reputacion there, Marcautyn de Colompna ; and finally assuredly reckons that now the king's highnesse and he be all one, that there shall neither Emperor nor Pope be made, but such as pleaseth them : he also told me, that this offer that he maketh yo^r grace proceedeth of perfect love and inward trust that he hath in the king's highnesse ; he sayeth, if he had not more trust and confidence in him than in any other prince living, he wold be loth that any other man shuld be pope : this, with more, whereof this is the sum, he told me, how he is minded to do for your grace. If your grace accept not this offer, I think he will do his best for some of his own cardinals, if any such chance fall. After this, that I had been more than an hour with the king, alone, came unto

him the ambassador of Denmark, who, after he had been awhile w^t the king, a servant of his was called to be trushman * betwixt them, and then was called in the Duke of Albany. † What the matter is, I know not, but the Duke of Albanye is made privy to it. At what tyme the great master toold me that the Duke of Albanye shuld be at the meting of the king's highnesse, and the king here; and also an ambassado' out of Scotland, where he saied he trusted some good conclusion shuld be taken for the Duke of Albanye; also the great master told me, that the king his master and he devised of yo^r grace, rehersing in effecte the substance, how he is minded to do for yo^r grace, as I have written afore; also the great master told me, that if the sicknesse of the queen here had not been, he shuld have taken his journey

* Interpreter.

† The Duke of Albany was fomenting troubles in Scotland.

as to morow to Montpelier ward, and bad me write, assuredly that there shall no thing be there treated nor concluded but yo' grace shall be advertysed of y' ; he hath also desired of me the copy of the bill * of the nombre of such persones as shall come w' the king's highnesse to the meting, which I have delivered to him ; he hath also promised me, that I shall have answer w'in thies iiii dayes, of every article touching the meting, and entreview, and also the order of redresse of the merchaunts, which, as soone as I can have, I shall send to yo' grace w' all diligence ; beseching the Holy Trynyte long to preserve yo' gce. From Parys, this xiiijth day of March.

Youres most bound." †

" To myn most especiall and singular good lord, my Lord Legat, Cardinall, and Chaunceler of England."

* A list of the English persons to be present at the interview between Henry and Francis in Picardy.

† From the tenor of the foregoing letters, it should

The contest for the crown of Cesar having terminated, Sir Thomas Boleyn hastily announces the election of Charles the Fifth, not without noticing the wayward attempts of the Duchess Louisa to disguise her chagrin and disappointment.

“ Pleasith y^e youre grace to understand, that the first day of this month I wrote my last letters to your grace, and as yet the king is not returned from Melun, where he hath been almost this fortnight a hunting. But hither is come letters wth great diligence to the king catholiques ambassadeur from Frankfort, and from my lady of Savoye *, specifying how the king her mas-

seem that Sir Thomas Boleyn, had no suspicion of the duplicity which Henry practised on this occasion; but it is notorious, that Dr. Pace, another confidential agent, had been dispatched to Germany, with positive orders to promote the interest of Charles the Fifth.

* Margaret, Governess of the Netherlands.

ter the xxviij day of the last month, at x of the clocke afore noon, by the assent and voices of all the electours, was chosen empero', and because there is yet no letters come out of Almayn to the king nor my lady here of this matter, my lady marvelleth much, and sayth she feareth that Mons. L'Admirall * is letted or evill intreatyd, because she hath no word from him, or else their post w^t letters is taken or stopped by the way. Neverthelesse my lady sayth if this be true saying, the king her sonne may nat be empero', she is right glad that the king catholique is chosen ; saying that though the king her sonne is *not* empero', yet it is a comfort to her that the king her *sonnes son* in law is empero'. † How be it the truth is, that both the king and my lady, and all this court, had rather any

* Bonivet.

† At that time Charles was contracted to the second daughter of Francis, Louisa, who died before the age of nine years.

other had been chosen empero' than the king catholique. My lady telleth me that she is assured it hath cost him a great good to atteyn to this empire, insomuch she sayth she knoweth for a truth, one of the electours hath had of him ii hundreth thousand crownes, and naming him of Colloigne. She sayeth also that the electours amongst them all hath not had of the king here." * —

The birth of Henry, Duke of † Orleans, furnished a different subject of correspondence; and, as might be expected, Sir Thomas Boleyn minutely details the ceremony of his christening, which was performed at midnight, Henry being himself one of the sponsors. On this occasion, the ambassador presented to the

* The duchess was mistaken in this calculation: it was, in reality, Francis, and not Charles, who had expended large sums in bribing the electors.

† Afterwards Henry the Second.

French Queen the *salt-spoon, the cup, and layer of gold*, which were graciously received; “and the King came, and thanked the King’s Highnesse of the great honor that he had done him; saying, that whenever it shall fortune His Highnesse to have a child, he shall be glad to do for him in like manner.”* In

• The ambassador then details in what manner he had distributed the hundred pounds entrusted to his discretion. “And the hundreth pounds that your grace sent to reward is bestowed as followeth; first, the nurse one hundred crownes; to iiij rockers of the yong Duke’s chamber ij hundreth crownes; to iij gentillwomen of the Quenes privy chamber, called Femes de Re, a hundreth and fyfty crownes; and at the offering xx nobles, which amounteth in all to the some of one hundreth pounds sterling, and xv crownes over, all which money was paid and delyvered by the hands of York, bearer, and Richmont, which can shewe your grace well enough thereof.

“Furthermore, as this bearer can shewe your grace, have been with me at my lodging, the king’s officers at arms which with importune asked reward, saying, that the Duke of Urbino at the christening of the Dolphin, rewarded them, and with the best answer that I could make them, nothing

concluding his letter, Sir Thomas Boleyn observes, with characteristic caution,

apaised, they went away discontent; neverthelesse I hear by honourable folks here, that the gift to the queen, and the money that is given in reward is sufficiently honorably and largely enough for the king's hon^r.

“ I have also laid out xli. xijs. in sending divers times min own folks, and other, that I have hired, to your grace into England, and to Calais, with letters in post and otherwise, the which xli. xijs. and xv. crownes that I have layd out now, more than the hundreth poundes that your grace sent me by York, to give in reward, is owing me, and for as moch as the last money that your grace sent me for a hundreth dayes ended the xxvth day of May last, I beseech you both to send me such diet money, as shall best please your grace, and that the said xli. xijs. and xv crownes that is owing me may be also delivered to my priest, which shall attend upon your grace for it.

“ Also, I receyved yestereven from your grace a letter dated the xxvijth day of May, concernyng the marchants matters, and divers other things, whereof after I have spoken w^t the king, my lady, or the counsell here, I shall wryte to your grace such aunswer as I shall have of them w^t diligence.

“ To myn most especiall and singular good lord, my Lord Legat, Cardinall, and Chaunceler of England.”

“ There is much speaking in the country, and more at Paris, of many strange bruits, whereof this bearer can show your Grace by mouth.”

Although these diplomatic records afford not any interesting information, respecting the state of Sir Thomas Boleyn's family, they furnish ample proofs of the diligence and punctuality with which he discharged his official duties, and almost lead us to regret that he should have been an obsequious courtier.

It is no small source of amusement to a reflective mind, to compare characters and events, of which time and experience have taught us to form a correct judgment, with the opinions once entertained of their relative value and importance. In the year 1520, no crisis was anticipated by the Pope, or the clergy, although Luther had already launched the bolt, with whose reverberation the powers of the Vatican were soon to tremble. On the eve of the most as-

tonishing revolution ever achieved by human agency, no alarm appears to have been experienced; neither statesmen nor cavaliers had leisure for the controversy between Luther and Tetzlar, whilst all Europe looked to the coalition of Henry and Francis, as the prelude of some political drama, in which each of these great princes was to enact an important part. Endless were the questions and consultations, and voluminous the instructions preliminary to this celebrated event. Amidst a negotiation frivolous and elaborate as the process of a Provençal court of love, one trait of political gallantry deserves notice:— Aware of Henry's predilection for the age of Edward the Third, the King of France submitted to him, whether he should not, in imitation of the Black Prince, have his *dinner served and carved on horseback*.* Although this proposition was negatived, in

* Herbert.

every other instance the ordonnances of chivalry were to be religiously observed; and it was especially stipulated, that, in the ensuing joust, the number of strokes given on either side should be referred to *the ladies!* Finally, after a longer interval than had been spent by the Edwards and Henries of former days, in acquiring the fairest provinces of France, the plain of Guisnes was chosen for the interview.* At this critical moment the young Emperor, in his passage to Flanders, approached the English coast, when, under pretence of paying his respects to his aunt Catharine, he threw himself on Henry's generosity, and voluntarily came to his court without a single precaution for safety and protection. Charmed with this proof of confidence, Henry was easily persuaded to pledge his friendship to the avowed rival of that Prince, whom he was about to visit

* In Picardy.

as an ally and a brother. From Catharine Charles received not only a cordial, but a tender welcome, whilst the ladies of her court lavished on him smiles and blandishments; but at the sight of Mary*, the beautiful French Queen, to whom he had once been contracted, he was observed to sigh and to betray unwonted sadness; and to this sentiment was attributed his refusal to dance, and an obvious indifference to all those gaieties which were usually found so attractive. In the sequel, it appeared that Wolsey's favor was the prize he hoped to win, and Henry's vanity the mistress he sought to captivate; and with such address was each flattered in his master-passion, that, at parting, he obtained a solemn promise, that a return should be

* "Peradventure the sight of the Lady Mary troubled him, whom he had sometime loved." Hall.— Many romantic tales were fabricated of his imaginary attachment: the princess herself was pretended to have avowed a passion for this prince, whom she had never seen, and who was then a boy of thirteen, when she looked at his portrait three times every day.

made to his visit in Flanders before the royal party came back to England. Within a few days after Charles had re-embarked, Henry was wafted to the coast of France, accompanied by his Queen, his sister Mary, her husband, and the most distinguished English nobility. At some little distance from the town of Guisnes, a temporary palace was prepared for Henry's reception, which the combined powers of English and Flemish mechanism had rendered rare and beautiful as the marvellous house constructed for Aladdin by his obedient genii. It is not improbable, that the plan of this curious edifice was suggested by one of those magnificent descriptions so common in tales of chivalry, which formed the popular reading of the day. According to Hall *, it might have been

* " At the entering into the palace, before the gate on
 " the plain, was builded a fountain of imbowed work,
 " gilt with fine gold, and bice ingrailed with *antike*
 " work; the old god of wine, called Bacchus, birling the
 " wine, which, by the conduits in the earth, ran to all
 " people plenteously with red, white, and claret wine,

called the Palace of Illusion ; but, abstracted from fancy and flattery, it appears to have been formed of moveable planks of

“ over whose head was written in letters of Roman, in
 “ gold, ‘ *facile bonne chère qui voudra.*’ On the other
 “ hand or side of the gate, was set a pillar, which was
 “ of ancient Roman work, borne with four lions of gold.
 “ The pillars wrapped in a wreath of gold, curiously
 “ wrought and intwined, and on the summit of the said
 “ pillar stood an image of the blind god Cupid, with
 “ his bow and arrows of love, ready, by his seeming,
 “ to strike the young people to love. The forgate
 “ of the same palace or place with great and mighty
 “ masonry was arched, with a tower on every side of
 “ the same part reared by great craft ; and embattled
 “ was the gate and tower, and in the fenestres and
 “ windows were images resembling men of war, ready
 “ to cast great stones. Also the same gate, or tower,
 “ was set with compassed images of ancient princes,
 “ as Hercules, Alexander, and others.

“ By the same gate all people passed into a large
 “ court, fair and beautiful ; for in this court appeared
 “ much of the outward beauty of the place. Far from
 “ the first cleare table were baie windows (i. e. green
 “ lattices) : on every side mixed with stories, curi-
 “ ously glazed, the posts or moinels of every window
 “ were gilt.”

timber, and covered with canvas so well painted as to resemble stone. Within, it was hung with arras and tapestry, the most rich and tasteful that the looms of Ghent and Antwerp could supply : but after all these efforts of ingenuity, it was found totally inadequate to the occasion ; since 2500 of the King's suite had no better resource than to lodge in tents, of which the inside was hung with white cloth, richly embroidered and surmounted by the union rose, interlaced with the fleur-de-lys. The spot selected for this encampment, was about half a league beyond the town of Guisnes, and about the same distance from the town of Ardres, in whose castle lodged Francis and his gallant court. Whilst Henry and his retinue, like crusaders, remained in their splendid pavilions, necessity must have led to a different distribution of the quadrupeds in his train, of which the horses alone amounted to the enormous number of 4326. To these, according to

previous stipulation, an equal number was opposed by the French party: thus the cordial meeting, which was to form an eternal union of friendship, resembled the clashing of two hostile armies, and seemed rather calculated to create impressions of distrust and jealousy, than to suggest images of peace and amity, hospitality and concord. It was on the tenth of June that the two Kings were first confronted; and so desirous was each prince to commemorate the interesting moment, that draftsmen were retained in either camp to delineate the prominent features of the scene, and authors employed to transmit to posterity its most trifling incidents.*

*. Hall, the Chronicler (the Recorder of London), attended by Henry's command. Fleuranges, and other men of talents were in the French camp. From the sketches taken by the English artist, Holbein composed the celebrated historical picture long in Windsor Castle, but presented by His late Majesty to the Society of Antiquaries. Similar sketches were made by the French artists.

On that auspicious morning, Henry rode forth on horseback towards Ardres, while Francis, in like manner, advanced towards Guisnes. A momentary impression of distrust is said to have passed over Henry's mind; but it was quickly dissipated, and, spurring on his steed, with undaunted confidence, he advanced before his attendants. No sooner had Francis perceived the movement, than he also came, and with an equally generous impulse received his royal guest. In an instant both Princes encountered each other, when each touched his bonnet; and each alighting, the two Princes eagerly embraced with every demonstration of fraternal affection; then walked arm in arm around the encampment, amidst the fixed gaze and rapturous acclamations of countless spectators. Their respective attendants, with a simultaneous movement, rushed also to each other's arms; Frenchmen and Englishmen embraced and walked together; national prejudices seemed suspended; ancient ri-

valry yielded to involuntary sympathy, and the generous emulation of honour, loyalty, and courtesy. Much of this enthusiasm might perhaps be attributed to the novelty of the spectacle, and still more to its magnificence. "I well perceived," says Hall, "the habiliments royal of the French King: his garment was a chemew of cloth of silver, culponed with cloth of gold, of damask cautelwise, and guarded on the borders with the Burgon bands."* The

* "Over that," continues the Chronicler, "he had a cloak of broached satin, with gold of purple colour, wrapped about his body, traverse beded from the shoulder to the waist, fastened in the loupe of the first fould; this said cloak was richly set with pearls and pretious stones. The French king had on his head a coif of damask gold set with diamonds, and his courser that he rode on was covered with a trapper of tissue, brodered with device, cut in fashion mantell-wise; the skirts were embowed and fret with frized work, and knit with corbelles and buttons tasseled of Turkie; making raines and headstall answering to the same work."

Having thus descanted on the monarch's dress, Hall devotes but few words to his person. "And verelie of

dress of Henry, who delighted in finery, was equally superb : even on ordinary occasions he was accustomed to make an ostentatious display of jewels—in the collar of Ballas rubies pendant from his neck *, the diamonds inserted in his bonnet, and the rings clustering round his fingers. On this day, in addition to the ruby † which he usually wore; on which was enamelled the battle of Bosworth Field, he displayed a profusion of emeralds, and other precious stones, which gave him a truly regal appearance. His courtiers vied in splendor with the attendants of Francis : the French soldiers appeared in uniforms of blue and yellow, emblazoned with the

his person the same Francis, a goodlie prince, state-lie of countenance, merrie of *cheere*, browne coloured, great eyes, high nosed, big lipped, fair brested, *broad shoulders*, small legges, and long feete."

* This collar, by order of Charles the First, was sold beyond sea, by the Duke of Buckingham and Lord Holland. See *Archæologia*.

badge of Francis, the Salamander, emblematic of the motto — “I nourish the good, extinguish the guilty.” Henry and the English cavaliers wore on their crests the hawthorn, — that cherished, though humble badge, for ever endeared to the house of Lancaster, from the circumstance of Henry the Seventh having placed on his head, in Bosworth Field, the crown of England, which had been discovered in an hawthorn-bush. After the first ceremonies the two kings withdrew to a tent of cloth of gold: on this spot, after reiterated congratulations, Henry began, *pro formá*, to read the articles, when, instead of designating himself the King of France, he stopt abruptly after “I Henry, King of England,” and laughing, exclaimed, “No, not the King of France; I should be an impostor if I claimed that title; for the king of France is here.” The rest of the day was not spent in political deliberation, but in making arrangements for pleasure, and in promoting mirth and

revelry ; from this moment commenced a jubilee, such as Europe had never witnessed ; in which jousting, drinking, music, and dancing, intermingled in unceasing rotation. The amusements of the day encroached on the slumbers of the night ; and from one tent to another resounded mirth, and minstrelsy, and joyous acclamation. A constant interchange of visits took place between the two courts, and the plain of Guisnes presented, at the same moment, the novel sight of queens, or ladies passing in horse-litters, or magnificent tents thrown open for the accommodation of noble guests. Adjoining the palace were two conduits, continually replenished with wine, which was offered without distinction to all comers ; contiguous to these, were two immense ovens, and culinary offices, in which the cooks, like the Cyclops, toiled incessantly, to satisfy the clamorous multitude. All the gradations of society were here ex-

hibited, from the sovereign, to whose table was borne the superb service of plate, to the temporary tabaret or booth, in which the vulgar passenger dearly purchased some trifling refreshment. An immense concourse of foreigners flocked to the spectacle; many of whom, could procure no better accommodation than a booth and a truss of straw. Of the French and English nobility, many carried their estates on their backs, or mortgaged, for many years to come, the amount of their revenues. During the fortnight that Henry remained at Guisnes, prodigality obtained the praise of munificence, and decency was outraged in the name of hospitality: day after day, came vagrants, artisans, and labourers, to drink and carouse, who afterwards lay stretched on the ground in brutal insensibility. Amidst these licentious excesses, high-mass was celebrated with the most imposing pageantry; the two monarchs sitting in chairs of state,

on either side of the altar, where stood Wolsey between them to perform the sacerdotal office. The finest singers in France assisted in the vocal part of this solemnity ; but Wolsey was the prominent personage. After having presented to the two monarchs the gospel and the pix, which each with reverence pressed to his lips, he advanced to the Queens Claude and Catharine, who sat side by side, in a separate oratory ; but these princesses, who really felt for each other the cordial good-will which their lords affected, instead of kissing the pix, tenderly embraced, and thus offered, before God and man, a pledge of amity, and love, and concord. In the tournament was concentrated the magnificence of both parties. On either side three hundred cavaliers entered the lists : Francis and his train appeared in purple spangled with gold ; whilst Henry and his band wore russet satin, wreathed with eg-lantine, of which the device is “ *sweet, and*

*“ pleasant, and green, if kindly touched ; but
 “ if rudely handled it may prick and wound.”*

To interpret these devices, some of which were intricate as the riddle of *Œdipus**, must have formed a constant source of amusement to the spectators ; nor was the royal balcony, which the queens and princesses and their ladies occupied, a less prominent object of attention. It is reluctantly admitted by our national chronicler, that the belles of France surpassed the English fair, in the richness and elegance of their habiliments. A splenetic † writer

* Of these devices, one of the most conspicuous was, “ a man’s heart burning in the hand of a lady, who held,” says Hall, “ a garden pot stilling on the heart.” The robes and trappings appear to have been emblazoned with anagrams, scarcely less perplexing than hieroglyphics. Henry displayed a series of cyphers signifying, “ God, my friend, my realm.” The French King wore the symbol of a book, on which were inscribed the characters A, M, E ; which being combined with the Latin word *liber*, for book, were made to signify, “ LIBERA ME,” — deliver me.

† Polydore Virgil.

has, indeed, insinuated that the Gallic costume was injurious to female modesty ; but there appears to have been no other foundation for this censure, than that the French ladies judiciously appropriated a lighter dress to dancing, divested of those cumbrous ornaments, which must have equally checked the elasticity or destroyed the grace of their movements.

The intercourse between Claude and Catharine appears not to have been merely courteous, but affectionate. The royal party, embellished by the beautiful Queen Mary, and enlivened by the witty Duchess of Alanson, included also her mother, the ingenious, though profligate Louisa, Duchess of Angouleme. In the French, as at the English court, the ladies dined at a separate table ; but it was observed by Fleuranges*, that, having first taken a private repast at home, they merely went to the banquet as to

* See Montfaucon's *Monumens de la Monarchie Françoise*.

a showy spectacle. Music and dancing relieved their attention, and the vociferations of the heralds for largess, were echoed by the spontaneous plaudits of the people. To Claude and Catharine, who aspired not to the character of politicians, perhaps not all these acclamations imparted such heartfelt pleasure, as two simple ballads *, com-

* Par fille et fils d' illustre geniture
 Deux nonpareils chefs, d'ordre de nature
 On voit reigner, au monde bons amis,
 Ceque, l'ung veut par l'autre est admis
 Soit en parler, ou en pleine esriture—
 Par fille et fils.

Le createur de toute creature,
 Pour demontrer ceque de sa facture,*
 Divin vouloir, a sur terre transmis
 Par fille et fils.

Amour en cœur, en a fait l'ouverture—
 Bein-heureux sont de voir, telle adventure,
 Francois, Anglois, jadis grands ennemis
 Car a dangier, ne seront plus soumis,
 Ains auront paix ferme en leur cloture,
 Par fille, et fils.

This, and the following ballad, are extracted

* Obsolete. — The French orthography is preserved.

posed in honor of the projected alliance between their children; in listening

from Montfaucon's *Monumens de la Monarchie Française*.

Le Parlement de volonté divine,
 Oú, presidoit Raison, qui tout domine,
 Prins au conseil deliberation,
 Fut arrêté sans contradiction,
 Qu' entre deux Rois, paix prendroit origine,
 Humilité demanda sa saisine,
 Et supplia que Raison sa voisine,
 Mist * cet arret en execution
 Au Parlement.

Distort, en Bryt et Guerre s'enmutine,
 Finance dit, mit en ruine,
 Larreein fait sa deploration,
 Sans *recepvoir* † leur opposition
 Dessus le champs le procès on termine,
 Au Parlement.

Adventuriers feront maigre cuisine
 Poules et coqs n' auront plus en pluvine,
 De leur excès on a fait mention,
 Au Parlement.

to which, they could not but indulge the anticipation of maternal fondness. Amidst all this pomp, and revelry, and luxury, there existed between the French and English, a mutual caution and distrust, truly characteristic of a barbarous age. Each monarch was encircled with guards, and, according to stipulation, accompanied by an equal number of attendants.

To the generous nature of Francis, such restraint was peculiarly revolting; and he one morning infringed it, by galloping to the palace of Guisnes before Henry was risen; when, proceeding to his chamber, he entered with a smile, exclaiming, "Lo! I come to be your prisoner." Flattered by this trait of confidence, Henry took from his neck a

Religieux qui vivent sans doctrine,
 Tremblent de peur comme au vent la courtine,
 Car il est dit, que *reformation*,
 Viendra de brief, et pour conclusion.
 Miche au couvert pour leur vivre St. Assigné.
 Au Parlement.

superb collar, which he besought him to wear for the sake of his brother. Francis readily accepted the pledge, but took occasion to bind on Henry's arm a bracelet still more precious. At length, when Henry prepared to leave his bed, Francis sportively insisted on being his valet that morning, and actually officiated as such with the adroitness of a page.

It is natural to enquire what part Anne Boleyn took in this superb spectacle. History mentions not her name; but it cannot be doubted, that she was included in the number of Claude's female attendants: many of her nearest relatives were present; in particular, her father's younger brother and his wife, Sir Edward and Lady Boleyn*; her maternal uncle, the Lord Edmund Howard; her father; and, admitted to the rank of a baroness, her re-

* Sir Edward Boleyn married the heiress of Sir John Tempest. See the pedigree of Boleyn, in the Appendix.

spected mother. * At this period, however, Anne was too young to have attracted much notice, although she probably danced before Henry, in the masque performed in compliment to his visit to Queen Claude, and dancing was an accomplishment in which she is allowed to have excelled the greater part of her contemporaries. It may also be remarked of Henry, that, during his continental excursion, he appears, by his decorous conduct, to have justified the eulogium which Erasmus had lately bestowed on his conjugal and domestic virtues. “What house is there, of any of your subjects, that can give an example of state in wedlock, so chaste and harmonious? Where can you find a wife more suitable to the best of husbands?”† At

* In the list preserved in the Lambeth library, published in Du Carrol's *Anglo-Norman Antiquities*, she is called, the Lady *Bologn*. See also the list published in Fiddes's *Life of Wolsey*.

† See Grove's *Life of Wolsey*.

this period similar impressions appear to have been produced on the mind of the Emperor Charles, who repeatedly felicitated his aunt on being united to the most magnificent and generous prince in Europe.

On the departure of Henry's court, the marvellous palace vanished, like the more elegant fabric of a modern *Autocrat**, leaving no vestige of its former grandeur but in the recollections of the spectators, to whom the meeting of Guisnes formed an eventful epoch of existence. "I account him a fortunate man," says Bishop Godwin, "who had seen two such kings and one emperor in so short a time."†

* The ice-palace of the Empress of Russia.

† The subsequent visit, which Henry and his suite made to Gravelines, excited disgust in the French court. Charles returned with Henry to Calais, where something like a repetition of the spectacle of Guisnes was attempted without the same success. "An amphitheatre was constructed, in the centre of which was a pillar, formed of eight masts tied together : this

pillar supported the weight not only of the roof of the whole fabric, (whither, as into a lower heaven, the moon and stars had descended,) but organs also, and places for the receipt of all sorts of music in abundance. These places were adorned with tapestry, statues, and curious pictures. All was prepared for the entertainment of the royal guests, and the banquet ready to be served in, when the same mischance that befel the French canopy, made our English heaven and earth meet together." "God," says Godwin, "as displeased with the mad prodigality of these two kings, sent a tempest, the violence whereof scattered this counterfeit heaven; blew out a thousand wax tapers, defaced the glorious thrones prepared for these princes; frustrated the expectation of the people, and forced the king to the necessity of another place."—Godwin's History of Henry the Eighth.

CHAPTER IV.

RETURN OF ANNE BOLEYN TO ENGLAND — ESTABLISHMENT AT COURT — ATTACHMENT TO PERCY — SEPARATION OF THE LOVERS.

IT is well known that Wolsey, in common with many contemporary statesmen, was addicted to the study of astrology, and sometimes amused his sovereign with flattering predictions, founded on the calculation of his nativity. Had the Cardinal really possessed the faculty of prescience, he might have discovered that the fortunes of Anne Boleyn's house were mysteriously connected with his evil destiny, and that her ascending star, was to be portentous of his ruin. Without referring to the old prophecy transmitted by Cavendish, it is worthy of remark, that, by one of those

casualties, which sometimes occur to baffle human penetration, Wolsey was the primary author of Anne Boleyn's greatness, — the creator, not the arbiter, of her splendid destiny. With him had originated that marriage between Louis and the Princess Mary, to which she owed her first elevation. By his influence, was to be renewed the hostility with France, and by his fiat she was recalled to her native country.

In the career of statesmen, one passion so frequently assumes the semblance of another, that policy may easily be mistaken for malice, and ambition perform the ministry of vengeance. In deserting the cause of Francis, Wolsey could have been actuated by no personal feelings of enmity or prejudice ; his affections were absorbed in one pursuit ; and even his prejudices submitted to the great object of all his efforts, intrigues, and combinations — the attainment of the papacy. A ludicrous parody was offered to the presumption of the minister,

in the vanity of his sovereign, who, with the aid (as is supposed) of More and Wolsey, had attacked Luther, in a catholic tract, for which he was rewarded by Pope Leo, with a bull, and a compliment, such as might have shocked the modesty of any but a royal author. But so elated was Henry with success, that he even tolerated the raillery of his jester Patch, in the well known quibble of, — “ Prythee Henry, leave the faith to defend itself, and let you and I defend our own kingdom.” *

With this farce was contrasted the tragedy of Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham. This nobleman, who was not only the first peer, but hereditary constable of England, maintained his priority by a

• It may be observed, that Henry, in his Defence of the Seven Sacraments, lays particular stress on that of marriage, as the institution of Paradise, quoting a passage, “ what therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” The King’s book was presented to the Pope, in full consistory, by Dr. John Clerk, Dean of Windsor.

suitable display of magnificence and liberality. In addition to these brilliant advantages, it was his misfortune to possess another, and unhappily an invidious claim to distinction in his remote affinity to the Plantagenets. In tracing his pretensions to royal blood, he had to revert to the son of Edward the Third, from whose daughter he was, in the female line, descended. But ambition speculates freely within the limits of possibility ; superstition even goes beyond them : and over the Duke's mind these two powerful springs of human action had obtained an alarming ascendant. Cajoled by the artifices of a monk, who predicted that the King should die childless, he ventured, in some unguarded moments, to expatiate on his latent pretensions to the succession ; and, as spies and delators formed a part of every nobleman's household, his words were reported to Henry, and by the agency of suborned domestics, articles of treason were

actually exhibited against him. When brought to trial, it might be some aggravation of his sufferings, that he recognised, among his judges, the Duke of Suffolk, the Earls of Northumberland and Oxford, with whom he had been so lately associated on the plain of Guisnes ; and that in the Duke of Norfolk, who presided at this tribunal, he beheld the friend of his youth, who, by the intermarriage of their children, was become his acknowledged brother.

On the death of his royal bride, the Lady Anne Plantagenet, the Lord Thomas Howard had fixed his affections on the second daughter of Buckingham, who, though already contracted, and attached to the young Earl of Westmorland, was compelled, by her father's authority, to espouse a man, ill-assorted in age, and from whose person and manners she recoiled with aversion. Little did the Duke suspect, that the child, whose happiness was thus sacrificed to schemes of greatness, would

have to struggle, in the wane of life, with desertion and indigence, with sickness and sorrow, with all the wrongs and sufferings that cruelty and injustice can inflict on helpless woman. *

The arraignment of Buckingham would alone fix an indelible stain on the judicial administration of this reign, since, in direct violation of the statutes of Edward the Third, (whom Henry professed to make the model of his ambitious imitation,) the noble culprit was tried and convicted, on the evidence of a perfidious monk, employed to seduce his loyalty, and the venal testimony of a domestic, who for misconduct had been discharged from his service, and from revenge conspired against his former benefactor. No overt act was

* This lady was supplanted in her husband's affections by a female attendant, for whose sake she was compelled to leave her house, and to live in comparative poverty, whilst her rival presided at the Duke's table, and publicly appeared with his children at court.

proved, to substantiate the charge of treason; but any ambitious dream was sufficient to alarm Henry's jealousy; nor did the peers venture to incur the charge of disloyalty by thwarting the wishes of a despotic sovereign. The Duke of Norfolk, who presided at the tribunal, shed tears, in pronouncing the fatal sentence. "My lord of Norfolk," replied the prisoner, "you have said, that, as a traitor, I should be bound; but traitor I am none; I was never any. But, my Lords, I nothing malign for that you have done to me; but the eternal God forgive you my death, as I do. I shall never sue to the King for life; howbeit he is a gracious prince, and more grace may come from him than I deserve. I desire you, my Lords, to pray for me." — On being conducted to his barge, he declined sitting on the cushions prepared for him, exclaiming, "When I went to Westminster, I was Duke of Buckingham, now am I

Edward Bohune, the worst caitiff of the world."

The Duke of Norfolk survived his unfortunate friend but two years. In that interval he witnessed the progressive advancement of his son-in-law Sir Thomas Boleyn, who was promoted to be Comptroller of the King's Household; but he lived not to draw any presage of his grandchild's greatness; and if he ever saw her after the memorable moment of Queen Mary's marriage, it was probably in the train of Queen Claude at the interview at Guisnes. Hostility to France having been resolved in the English cabinet, a plausible pretext for war could not long be wanting; and after the ordinary process of outrage on the liberty and property of aliens residing, on the faith of former treaties, in either kingdom, the Duke of Suffolk invaded France, and various depredations were reciprocally committed by the belligerent parties. A formal requisition was also made to Francis,

diminished, and who, whilst he assumed in the state the supremacy conferred by talent, controuled the Queen through the medium of her husband's authority, and governed the King by flattering his passions, and administering to his pleasures.

Although Henry continued to live with Catharine in seeming concord, it was well known to his confidential intimates, that he had become indifferent to her person and weary of her society. At the period of their marriage, they had sympathised in many of their tastes and pursuits, nor was the Queen less acceptable to her youthful consort for those retired and sedentary habits, derived from the Spanish court, which forbade her to dance, to hunt, or sing, like the less fastidious princesses of England. In her happier days, she was endeared to him by a certain feminine reserve, tempered with mildness, that pervaded her general deportment. Eagerly as Henry sought popular applause for

himself, he was well pleased that the partner of his throne should remain the unambitious spectator of his exhibitions and his triumphs; whilst, on his part, he witnessed with complacency her progress in *tent-stitch* * and *tapestry*, and approved the reformation which, both by precept and example, she sought to introduce in female manners. Unhappily for Catharine, as her beauty declined, her gravity increased; and though celebrated for her learning, she appears not to have possessed those companionable talents which enliven domestic retirement. It is the misfortune of the female sex, that superior moral qualities, though necessary to ensure esteem, are not sufficient to preserve affection; and although Catharine's exemplary virtues were such as disarmed her husband's censure, he often repined at her "tediousness and peevishness†," when,

* Catharine has been celebrated in Latin and English verse, for her proficiency in this accomplishment.

† Herbert. Fiddes.

in reality, he merely missed in her the faculty of participating in his favorite enjoyments. If, at stated seasons, she still presided at the banquet, her heart was no longer in unison with the scene ; submission was a poor substitute for sympathy ; obedience atoned not for the absence of animation ; and Henry gladly escaped from Catharine's mild, but melancholy aspect, to alluring smiles, and exhilarating companions. Hitherto, with the exception of Lady Tallbois, he had been devoted to no acknowledged mistress ; even for her his attachment had been kept alive by the birth of a son, whom, in his solicitude for a male heir, he once thought of including in the succession to the crown. Although his propensity to gallantry was not unsuspected, a sense of decency and propriety had hitherto induced him to conceal his irregular conduct from the world ; and if his wife had sometimes the pain of hearing of his aberrations from morality she was

spared the anguish of watching his seductions, and detecting his infidelities.

It was remarked, that with a rigid observance of punctilio, Henry continued to dine and sup in the Queen's chamber ; but no sooner was the meal dispatched, than, attended by Sir Edward Neville, Sir Francis Brian, and two or three familiar associates, he frequently entered his barge, masked and disguised ; and, like the Caliph Haroun al Raschid, went in pursuit of pleasant adventures.

On such occasions, his most agreeable haunt was Yorke House*, where Wolsey, according to preconcerted arrangement, had prepared a banquet for his reception. Of these rich voluptuous entertainments, Cavendish has transmitted a description, which, in his play of Henry the Eighth, is immortalised by Shakspeare. To the same high authority, we may refer the popular tradition, that Henry the Eighth first met

* On the site of Whitehall.

Anne Boleyn at a masked ball, in the Cardinal's palace. *

“ On one of these occasions,” as Cavendish relates, “ the King and his companions came, disguised as shepherds, in garments made of fine cloth of gold, and fine crimson satin, (paned,) and cappes of the same, with visors of good proportion of *visnamy*, their hairs and beards of fine silver wire, or black silk: before this gallant company, appeared sixteen torch-bearers, and three drummers; when they reached the water-gate, a loud salute announced the arrival of honorable guests, and the tables were set in the chamber of presence, all covered, and my Lord Cardinal sitting under the cloth of estate there, having all his service

* It should however be observed, that the minute description of Cavendish nearly agrees with the brief sketch which Holinshed has introduced, of the entertainment given in 1518, by Cardinal Wolsey to the French ambassadors; at which Henry danced with his sister, the Queen, Duchess of Suffolk, and where his mistress, Elizabeth Blount, was present: the principal difference between them is, that Cavendish makes Henry play at the game of mumchance.

alone ; and there was there set, a lady and a nobleman, and a gentleman and a gentlewoman, throughout all the tables in the chamber, on the one side, which were made adjoining, as it were but one table, all which order and devise was done by the Lord Sands, then Lord Chamberlain, and Sir Henry Guildford, Comptroller of the King's House : then, immediately after this great shot of the guns, the Cardinal desired the Lord Chamberlain, and the Comptroller, to look what it should mean, as though he knew nothing of the matter ; they, looking out of the windows into the Thames, returned again, and shewed him, that it seemed they were noblemen, and strangers arrived at his bridge, coming, as ambassadors, from some foreign prince : with that, quoth the Cardinal, I desire you, because you can speak French, to take the pains to go into the hall, there to receive them according to their estates, and to conduct them into this chamber, where they shall see us, and all these noble per-

sonages, being merry at our banquet, desiring them to sit down with us, and to take part of our feast. Then went they down into the hall, where, as they received them with twenty new torches, and conveyed them up into the chamber, with such a number of flutes and drums as I have seldom seen together at one place and time. At their arrival into the chamber, two-and-two together, they went directly before the Cardinal, where he sate, and saluted him very reverently; to whom the Lord Chamberlain, for them, said, ‘ Sir, forasmuch as they be strangers, and cannot speak English, they have desired me to declare unto you, that they having understanding of this, your triumphant banquet, where was assembled such a number of excellent fair dames, could do no less, and under the supportation of your Grace, but to repair hither, to view as well their incomparable beauty, as for to accompany them at mumchaunce, and then after to dance with them, and to have of their

acquaintance. And, Sir, furthermore, they require of your Grace licence to accomplish the same cause of their coming.' To whom the Cardinal said, he was very well content they should so do. Then went the maskers, and first saluted all the dames, and then returned to the most worthiest, and then opened their great cup of gold, filled with crowns, and other pieces of gold to whom they set certain of the pieces of gold to cast at, thus perusing all the ladies and gentlewomen: to some they lost, and of some they won, and perusing after this manner all the ladies, they returned to the Cardinal with great reverence, pouring down all the gold left in their cup, which was above two hundred crowns. 'Oh!' quoth the Cardinal, and so cast the dice and won them, whereof was made great noise and joy. Then, quoth the Cardinal, to my Lord Chamberlain, 'I pray you that you will shew them, that meseemeth there should be a nobleman amongst them who

is more meet to occupy this seat and place than am I, to whom I would most gladly surrender the same, if I knew him.' Then spoke my Lord Chamberlain to them in French, declaring my Lord Cardinal's words, and they, redounding him again in the ear, the Lord Chamberlain said to my Lord Cardinal, ' Sir, they confess that among them there is such a noble personage, whom, if your Grace will point out from the rest, he is content to disclose himself, and to take and accept your place most worthily.' With that, the Cardinal taking a good advisement among them, at the last, quoth he, ' Meseemeth the gentleman with the black beard should be even he ;' and, with that, he rose out of his chair, and offered the same to the gentleman in the black beard, with his cap in his hand. The person to whom he offered then his chair was Sir Edward Neville, a comely knight, of a goodly personage, that much more resembled the King's person in that mask than any other : the King hearing, and per-

ceiving the Cardinal was deceived, could not forbear laughing, but pulled down his vizor, and Master Neville's also, and dashed out such a pleasant countenance and cheer, that all the noblest estates there assembled, perceiving the King to be there amongst them, rejoiced very much. The Cardinal eftsoons desired his highness to take the place of estate, whom the King answered, that he would go first and shift his apparel, and so departed, and went straight into my Lord Cardinal's bed-chamber, where was a great fire prepared for him; and new apparelled him with rich and princely garments. And in the time of the King's absence, the dishes of the banquet were cleane taken up, and the table spread again, with new and clean perfumed cloaths, every man sitting still until the King's majesty, with all his maskers, came in among them again, every man new apparelled. Then the King took his seat under the cloth of estate, commanding every person

to sit still as they did before. In came a new banquette before the King's majesty, and to all the rest throughout the tables, wherein, I suppose, were served two hundred dishes of wonderous costly devices and subtilties. Thus passed they forth the night in banquetting, dancing, and other triumphant devices, to the great comfort of the King, and pleasant regard of the nobility there assembled."*

Whether it were at York House, or at Greenwich, that Henry and Anne Boleyn first met, it appears to have been under Wolsey's auspices that she arrested his attention. In the Queen's presence-chamber she might have been occasionally eclipsed by fairer faces, to which superficial observers would award the prize of beauty. That Anne was a brunette is well known, by description and representation from the artist and the poet†; and it is notorious, that on one of

* Cavendish's Life of Wolsey.

† " There was at this time presented to the eye of the court the rare and admirable *beutie* of the fresh and

her fingers was a supplemental nail; a defect which, if we may credit her encomiasts, she

yonge Lady Anne Bolein, to be attendichte upon the Queene. In this noble imp the graces of nature, graced by gracious *educacion*, seemed even at the first to have promised blis unto hereafter times; she was taken at that time to have a bewtie not so whitly *cleere* and fresh, above al we may *esteeme*, which appeared much more excellent by her favour passinge sweete and chearful, and thes both also increased by her noble presence of shape and *fasion*, representing both mildness and majesty, more than can be exprest. Ther was found indeede upon the side of her naile upon one of her fingers some little shoue of a naile, which yet was so small, by the report of those that have seen her, as the *woorkmaister* seemed to leave it an occasion of greater grace to her hand, which, with the tip of one of her other fingers, might be and was usually by her hidden, without any least blemish to it. Likewise ther wer said to be upon certin parts of her boddy small moles, incident to the clearest complections; and certainly both thes were none other than might more stain their writings with note of malice, than have catch at such light moles in so bright beams of bewtie, than in any part shaddow it, as may right wel appeare by many arguments, but chiefly by the choice and exquisite judgments of many brave spirits that weer esteemed to honor the honorable parts in her, even honored of envie itself."

Wiatt's Life of Queen Anne Bolen.

had the address to conceal, or the skill to improve into a perfection. The fascination of Anne appears not to have resided even in her features, though of these the loveliness is almost universally acknowledged ; but in her eloquent eyes, the symmetry of her form, the mingled airiness and dignity of her carriage ; above all, in those indefinable charms of grace and expression which lend interest to every glance, and intelligence to each movement. Such, at least, is the impression that Wiatt gives in the following lines, avowedly written to convey an idea of her charming countenance :—

A face that should content me wond'rous well
 Should not be fair,—but lovely to behold ;
 With gladsome cheer all grief for to expel,
 With sober looks ; so would I that it should
 Speak without words, such words as none can tell.
 Her tresse also should be of crisped gold,
 With wit, and then might chance I might be tied,
 And knit again the knot that should not slide.*

* See Nott's Life of Wiatt. The ' tresse of crisped gold' is a poetic license. The colour of Anne Boleyn's

Trained in the court of France, Anne had learned to improve her person by all those embellishments of dress, which, under the direction of good taste, render art so powerful an auxiliary to nature; discarding, as far as etiquette permitted, the stiff costumes of English dames, she ventured to introduce such novelties of fashion as best became her own form; and the admiration she excited soon induced other ladies to imitate her example. But it was not only at the toilette that her taste was confessedly pre-eminent: unrivalled in every captivating talent, she danced like a nymph, and not only touched the lute and virginal with a masterly hand, but accompanied them with her voice in a strain of delicious melody. To these brilliant accomplish-

hair appears to have been a dark brown, as may be seen by a portrait taken of her by Holbein, still preserved in Warwick Castle.

ments she added an exquisite winningness and propriety of manners, not less rare, and even more seducing than beauty, insomuch, as Lord Herbert says *, that “when she composed her hands to play and her voice to sing, it was joined with that sweetness of countenance that three harmonies concurred: likewise when she danced, her rare proportions carried themselves into all the graces that belong either to rest or motion; briefly, it seems, the most attractive perfections were eminent in her.”

Of her moral qualities it might be less

* Lord Herbert appears to have derived his account of Anne Boleyn from Sir John Russell, the first Earl of Bedford, — on whose authority he informs us, that Jane Seymour, was the more majestic, but Anne Boleyn the more lovely; that *love* threatened in the eyes of Jane, but laughed in those of Anne; that the former, the richer she was dressed the fairer she appeared, but that the other never looked so fair as when she was plainly dressed. The same connoisseur adds, “though Queen Catharine, in her younger days, was for beauty and dignity not often to be paralleled.”

easy to form a judgment. She appears to have imbibed the pride of her mother's character, and to have inherited her father's ambition. The frankness of her nature had so far prevailed over an artificial education, and the lessons of prudence inculcated by statesmen and diplomatists, that in defiance of caution and experience, she spoke and acted from the impulse of feeling, with an intrepidity sometimes honored as sincerity, more often stigmatised as imprudence. To this indiscretion she added a spirit of volatile coquetry, which, though palliated by the manners of the age, often exposed her conduct to suspicion, and misrepresentation.

The interior of Queen Catharine's court could have offered little for her amusement. Much praise had been bestowed on that princess for those meritorious labors in tent-stitch and tapestry, with which she sought to supply the place of hunting, archery, and other unfeminine modes of

pastime. It does not, however, appear, that these labours were beguiled with a book or a song ; and Anne, who possessed, in the vivacity and facility of her conversation, another source of attraction, little appreciated by the indefatigable sempstresses that engrossed the Queen's favor, was naturally disposed to become impatient of seclusion in such uncongenial society.

In the economy of the royal household existed many peculiarities, which, to those who possessed either cultivated taste, or refined feeling, must have been offensively repulsive. * It might seem paradoxical to assert, that there is a partial excess of luxury incident to a rude state of society, of which the more general diffusion which

* Of the total absence of order and decorum from this scene of profligate dissipation, some idea may be formed from the proclamation issued against " strong and mighty beggars, rascals, vagabonds, and *masterless* folk, who hang about the court."

characterises an advanced state of civilisation, affords the best corrective. In the gorgeous finery of King Henry's court, we often trace a resemblance to the barbaric splendor and magnificence exhibited by the despots of Asia and Africa ; and poorly as that age was furnished with those more elegant conveniences and accommodations, that essentially contribute to the comfort and refinement of modern life, it will be found, that, wherever wealth abounded, there prevailed a superfluity of all that was rare and precious, — an excess of pomp and prodigality, to which modern Europe scarcely offers any parallel. Under the Tudors, the frank hospitality of the rude Saxon monarchs was still perpetuated on public festivals, at Christmas and Easter, on twelfth day and Michaelmas, and some other extraordinary occasions, when the King lived in hall, and freely treated all who asked for entertainment. In general

the palace, like the pageant so often admitted within its walls, presented a motley combination of bloated luxury and squalid wretchedness, fantastic elegance and sordid penury. The royal apartments were strewn with rushes ; the stairs and floors of the other rooms were often inlaid with filth ; and whilst fires * blazed in the great chambers, hung with arras, the inferior officers were shivering with cold ; and some of their attendants literally beggars.

Among other statutes published in the 17th year of this reign, at Eltham, was one, by which it was enacted, that none but decent persons should be admitted into court-service ; that in future no † rascal should be employed in any domestic capacity ; and that the scullions of the kitchen should not be permitted to go naked. By

* Coals were only allowed for the King, Queen, and Lady Mary's chambers.

† A rascal implied an illiterate vagrant ; one who could not even repeat his Creed.

one article, it was prohibited to * any of the King's household to follow the King when he should go on his pastime, unless invited. By another article, obviously dictated by Henry's personal feelings, it is enacted, that in future none be admitted but persons of good demeanor, fashion, gesture, countenance, and stature, so as the King's house may be furnished with such as are tried, elect, and picked for the King's honor. To the privilege of maintenance, implied in the *bouche* of court, a comparatively small number of the palace

* It was expressly stipulated, that the officers of the squillery shall see silver and pewter vessels kept safe, (pewter vessels being then costly;) and it is forbidden to the King's attendants to steal locks or keys from cupboards, or other articles of furniture out of noblemen's or gentlemen's houses where he goes to visit. The King's *barber* is enjoined to be cleanly, and by no means to frequent the company of misguided women, and idle persons. The Knight Marshal is directed to take good care that all such unthrifty and common women as follow the court be banished.

inmates were admitted ; but for the personal attendants both of the King and Queen, there was in general kept a plentiful table, and to the six maids of honor were allotted a chet loaf and a manchet, a chine of beef, and a gallon of ale for breakfast.*

* “ King Henry,” says Loyd, “understood a man and a dish. Among the dainties which he relished, were giggots of mutton or venison, stopped with cloves ; chickens in crituary ; larkes, sparrow, or lamb stued with chines of mutton ; venison pasty ; jelly hippocras ; cream of almonds.

“Stabling was allowed to such of the Queen’s gentlewomen as were peer’s daughters. Seven messes of ladies dined at the same table in the great chamber ; a chet loaf and manchet, ale and wine, beef and mutton, were supplied in abundance, with the addition of capons or hens, pigeons and conies. On fast-days, salt salmon, salted eels, whittings, gurnet, plaice, and flounders ; fruit was reserved for Lent ; butter was always allowed in profusion.

“ The Queen’s table was furnished with more elegance, and with the additional delicacies of fricandes or custard, frythour or tarte ; besides every delicacy of the season.

“ The brewer is enjoined not to put hops or brimstone into the ale.

“ A swan was five shillings, a capon eighteen-pence,

The utmost regularity was observed in the order and rotation of meals. The gentlemen and ladies dined in separate apartments, at stated hours, throughout the year, never departing from this rule, but on high and especial occasions. It was the prerogative of the King alone, to dine when he thought proper; and to Henry, who was notoriously an epicure, this prerogative was perhaps of some importance.

The Queen's maids, although gentlewomen by birth and education, appear not to have possessed any peculiar privileges :

pigeons eight-pence per dozen; a fat heron was eight-pence, a partridge four-pence, pullets three-pence each, conies two shillings per dozen; the stork, the bustard, and the crane were then admitted to the table.

“ A munificent provision of twenty-four loaves per day was made for the king's greyhounds, other dogs were banished the court, with the exception of spaniels kept for the ladies.

“ A gift was allowed to whoever married, or made the king a present.”

they were indeed permitted to retain in attendance on their persons a waiting-woman, and a spaniel; to receive presents and amatory verses from their *servants*; and exhibit emblems and devices among their rivals and admirers. To the monotony of their life, some little interruption was offered, when they migrated at Christmas and Easter, from Richmond to Eltham, or from Greenwich to Bridewell*, the usual residence of the royal family in London: and they participated in the bustle and confusion incident to each dislodgement of the royal household. During the summer, they were often treated with an excursion to Windsor, the traditionary seat

* Whenever the King and court removed, it was usual to transport with them the hangings, bedding, and portable furniture; all included under the general appellation of household stuff. The enormous sum of three hundred pounds, was allowed in the household-book, to defray the expences incidental to each migration. See *The Ordonnances of the Royal Household*; also several papers in the *Archæologia*.

of Oberon and Titania ; or to the still more romantic shades of Havering-Bower * ; and sometimes, though rarely, they were permitted to accompany the King and Queen in a royal progress, to some baronial castle, at a considerable distance from the metropolis.

In expeditions such as these, performed on horseback, through roads little frequented, and districts thinly populated, the fair equestrians had often to experience fatigue and inconvenience, for which they were amply repaid by the gallantry of their servants or protectors. In the march of a royal progress, as in that of a victorious army, contributions were levied on the neighbouring gentry, who were eager to offer accommodation and amusements to such distinguished guests.

Whether Anne Boleyn repined at the

* Havering-Bower, in Essex ; a favorite spot with Queen Catharine.

restraints annexed to her situation, or whether the heart, that seemed light as air, was really susceptible of tender emotions, it is certain, that she had not long been an inmate of the English court, before she listened to an overture of marriage. Among other prerogatives of prelates and cardinals, it was, assuredly, not the least flattering, that the sons of noblemen were often placed in their household for education or improvement, and ushered into life under their care and superintendence. The palace of Wolsey was, with reason, considered as the best introduction to the court, and the fairest avenue to preferment. It was, therefore, not surprising, that even the Earl of Northumberland, the most genuine representative of the old English nobility, should solicit and obtain for his eldest son this envied distinction. Of the Hotspurs, the present Earl was confessedly a degenerate de-

scendant, since he had surrendered the trust, long hereditary in his family, of Warden of the Marches; and, during a temporary dispute with the King, solicited the intercession of Wolsey to avert his displeasure. But if the Earl emulated not his forefathers in heroism, he surpassed them in urbanity and cultivation; and in his domestic establishments, both at Wresil Castle and Leckingfield Manor, he displayed indications of an improved and progressive taste, whilst he retained whatever was admirable in feudal grandeur, or worthy of royal munificence. To the mind of a reflective spectator, there is something in the Gothic turrets and moated walls of a baronial castle, that produces involuntary impressions of melancholy and respect, and conjures to fancy an image of antiquity, at once awful and attractive, touching and sublime. But this sentiment is the offspring of modern refinement; an association that clings to the "ivy-mantled towers;" an

emotion inspired by the silence that pervades the halls, and chambers, and which imparts a certain sepulchral solemnity to those relics and ruins of departed greatness. In reality, the castellated mansion of our forefathers was little calculated to awaken serious thoughts or refined feelings; and, except in the absence of the family, presented a constant scene of boisterous mirth, litigious broils, and bustling activity. The approach to a nobleman's seat was indicated by the baying of hounds, the gingle of hawks' bells, the lowing of herds, with other symbols of rural occupation. The aspect of the drawbridge and portcullis was somewhat repulsive; but to these features of a ruder age, were contrasted others more congenial; and the spacious park, the blooming orchards, the fragrance of the plants, the flight of birds, all announced the vicinity of peace and affluence, security and luxury. A little town was included within

the walls, in which the inhabitants presented almost every shade of English society. The crowded hall reflected the image of old Gothic hospitality: at the long oak-table the guests continued to be seated, and served above and below the salt-cellar; but the lord and lady no longer presided beneath the Dais*; and in the three or four chambers fitted up for their reception was to be detected something of trans-alpine elegance, intermingled with oriental luxury.† The

* In the old baronial hall, it is well known, a large salt-cellar stood in the middle of the table, above or below which the guests were seated, according to their station. In the elder times, the lord and lady took their place, on a seat raised above the rest, under a canopy, hence called a *Dais*.

† At the Earl of Northumberland's castle of Wresil, was a study called Paradise; a closet in the middle, of eight squares, latticed: at the top of every square was a desk lodged to set books on books, on coffers within them; and these seemed as if joined to the top of the closet; and yet, by pulling, one or all would come down, and serve for desks to lay books on. In the two principal chambers were small beautiful stair-

loom of Antwerp furnished the arras, which contributed so essentially to the comfort and embellishment of the apartments; and pithy sentences and metrical stanzas were sometimes unrolled in ornamented tapestry.* Amongst the members of this motley

cases, with octagon screens, covered with bold sculptures, from the designs of Palladio.—See the Household book of Henry Algernon Percy, Earl of Northumberland.

* In Wresil Castle, and other mansions, some of the apartments were adorned in the oriental manner, with metrical inscriptions, called Proverbs. In one of the chambers at Wresil Castle, is a poem of twenty-four stanzas, each containing seven lines, of which the following is a specimen:—

When it is tyme of cost, and great expence,
 Beware of waste, and sparely measure,
 Who that outrageously maketh his dispense,
 Looseth his goods, not long for to endure.

There were gardens within, and orchards without the moat. In the orchards were raised artificial mounts, the ascent to the top of which was by winding walks, like steps, composed of cockle-shells, so contrived, as to reach the summit without labour.

family were found mechanics, artisans, boors, vagrants, scholars, and poets, tumblers, jugglers, and jesters. Various were the establishments formed in this compendious household. The choristers of the chapel were regularly instructed in music. The falconer had his auxiliaries : and a field was consecrated to the triumphs of archery. The banqueting-house and tennis-court offered resources for an idle hour. A master of the revels was ready at Christmas, to exhibit plays* and mummeries suited to the

Of this immense mansion, a very small part was furnished : four or five rooms were fitted up for the great folks ; the rest were merely offices and cabins, in which beds of the coarsest kind were provided, as occasion required. There was the gallery, the chapel, my lord's chamber, my lady's closet, the nursery, the great chamber, the carved chamber, paradise ; and the lower house, the hall, the spicery, &c.

* These were something in the style of the old mysteries or moralities.

It was stipulated that the almoner should be a maker of interludes. Amongst the inmates of the household were officers of arms, heralds, yeomen of

occasion. In fine weather, the park invited to exercise, whilst the horrors of a dull day were beguiled by chess and dice, and the privileged jester.* In many of its features, the baronial mansion was obviously the

the chambers, yeomen of the household, fourteen gentlemen and choristers of the chapel, two bass singers, two tenor; domestic minstrels, with the tabret, the lute, the rebeck: there were also falconers, archers, carpenters, painters, carvers, &c. When the family removed to Leckingfield Manor, the rooms were stript of hangings and furniture, and thirteen carts filled with household stuff.—See the Accompt Book of the household of Henry Algernon Earl of Northumberland.

* There was also a master of the grammar-school. To the chapel were annexed a dean, a sub-dean, an almoner, two priests, my lord's secretary, my lord's riding chaplain, a priest for my lord, a priest for the eldest son, another for my lord's household, another to read the Gospel daily in the chapel; there was another to sing mass daily; and there were six children choristers.

The ordinary breakfast of my lord and my lady was of two manchets, a quart of beer, a quart of wine, two pieces of salt fish — herrings, or sprats. At the other meals, capons, mutton, cels, pigs, and pigeons predominated.

counterpart of the royal palace. The lady had her gentlewomen attendants ; the lord his council : and so little was it considered a disparagement to men of gentle blood, to enter such service, that the pages were commonly chosen from families of rank, and often attained the honors of knighthood. No contrast could be more striking than what the same mansion presented during the residence, or absence of its numerous family, when stript of all moveable furniture, without plate or porcelain, dismantled of its arras, by men and animals alike deserted, it almost realized the images of desolation and proscription so beautifully pourtrayed in the *Cid*, — “ when no hawks were seen on the perches ; no cloaks lying on the benches ; no voices heard in the hall, which had so lately echoed the sound of mirth and revelry : and now, like a city desolated by plague, seemed but one vast sepulchre, prepared to receive the dead.”

Such was Wresil Castle ; such the seat of the Percies ; and there, but for the tyranny of Henry's passion, had Anne Boleyn lived in elegant and unambitious retirement. The young Lord Percy attended the Cardinal in his daily visits to the King ; and whilst the favorite was admitted to a private conference with his master, his noble page amused himself in one of the Queen's apartments, where he was sure to meet with the Maid of Honor.

In the progress of their acquaintance, a mutual attachment was created, and the young nobleman frankly offered his hand, which was as frankly accepted. From his father the lover anticipated no opposition ; his mistress felt equally assured of parental approbation ; and to their mutual felicity nothing was wanting but caution and concealment. Unfortunately Lord Percy had not acquired experience, and Anne was never destined to learn discretion. Their

unguarded looks were noticed, their reciprocal sentiments suspected ; and Henry, who had hitherto regarded Anne merely as an object of amusement, suddenly discovered that he had conceived for her a violent passion.

There is something truly characteristic of an arbitrary spirit, in the abrupt explosion of his feelings, and in his prompt and decided resolution, to withhold Anne Boleyn from the possession of another. Naturally vain and susceptible of flattery, he perhaps doubted not of really supplanting Lord Percy in her affections. He was at least determined to divide her from his rival, without having any distinct idea in what manner he should attach her to his own person. In this perplexity he had recourse, as usual, to Wolsey ; who, at once to conceal and gratify his master's wishes, suggested the expedient of sending for the old Earl of

Northumberland, by whose parental prerogative the engagement might be cancelled without any other interference. In the meanwhile he undertook, by his own authority, to prevent Lord Percy from seeing the object of his love; a task in which he employed neither persuasion nor kindness; but if we may credit Cavendish, upbraided and rebuked his folly with the most unfeeling asperity; commanding him, as he valued life and honor, for ever to desist from the pursuit of Anne Boleyn.

Contrary to his ordinary habits of deference and submission, the young lord justified his choice, expressing his conviction that his father could form no reasonable objection to his mistress, who, in birth and accomplishments, was fully his equal; and “though,” he added, “she be but a simple knight’s daughter, by her mother she is well nigh the Norfolk blood, and her father

is one of the heirs general of the Earl of Ormond.” *

Incensed, or rather, perhaps, alarmed at this opposition, the Cardinal arraigned his disloyalty; adding, that though the lady knew it not, she was, by her sovereign, promised to another, with whom he was sure, she would be well satisfied. At this fatal intimation, aggravated by the idea of Anne's possible infidelity, Lord Percy could no longer restrain his tears; and, in an agony of grief, such as can only be felt when the heart is suddenly bereaved of hope and happiness, he implored the Cardinal's intercession to soften the King in his favour; protesting that he had given

* From this passage, it appears that his attachment took place before September 1525, when Sir Thomas Boleyn was created Viscount Rochford. The editor of Henry's love letters, in the Harleian Miscellany, pretends that Anne Boleyn did not come to England till 1527; a palpable mistake, since the Earl of Northumberland, the father of Lord Percy, died in 1526.

his mistress a pledge never to be withdrawn but with the sacrifice of honor. Disconcerted by tenacity so little expected, the wary statesman broke off the conversation, and instantly dispatched a special messenger to the north, who was charged not to return without the Earl of Northumberland. With whatever surprise or displeasure the Earl received the summons, it was one to which he presumed not to refuse implicit obedience. When his barge reached York Gate, the Cardinal proceeded to the gallery, to welcome his noble guest, and without allowing him to exchange a word with his son, conducted him to his private apartment. Their interview was long but decisive. Little as the Earl was disposed to resist the prerogative, which had been long exercised by the sovereign, in forming or controuling the alliances of noble subjects, he was, perhaps, as little inclined to accept, as his daughter-in-law, a woman

who had received a foreign education, and who, though “well nigh” to the Norfolk blood, was not heiress to the estates of Butler and Ormond. With avidity, therefore, did he listen to the Cardinal’s representations, and readily promised to adopt his prudent counsels. After this satisfactory explanation, they parted with every demonstration of cordial friendship ; and the Earl, that no suspicion might remain of his real intentions, in repassing the gallery, took his seat on a bench in front of the river, and calling to him his son, who approached with humble reverence, in the presence of the pages and the other numerous attendants, publicly reprehended his late conduct, solemnly enjoining him, on the penalty of disinherittance, to renounce for ever the hope of being united to Anne Boleyn. The dialogue, as related by Cavendish, affords a curious picture of the domestic manners of the age, and strikingly exemplifies the slavish submission exacted

for parental authority. * “ Son, quoth he, even as thou art, and always hast been, a proud, licentious, disdainful, and a very unthrifty waster ; so hast thou now declared thyself: wherefore, what joy, what comfort, what pleasure or solace shall I conceive of thee, that thus, without discretion, hast misused thyself, having neither regard unto thy natural father, nor unto thy natural sovereign lord, to whom all subjects loyal bear faithful obedience, nor yet to the wealth of thine own estate, but hast so unadvisedly assured thyself unto her, for whom thou hast purchased the King’s high displeasure, intolerable for any subject to sustain ; and, but that his Grace doth consider the lightness of thy head, and wilful qualities of thy person, his displeasure and indig-

* Cavendish appears, in imitation of contemporary chroniclers, to have at least lengthened, if not composed, the speeches here detailed. They are, however, corroborated by the Twisden manuscripts, lately published in Dr. Nott’s *Life of Wiatt*.

nation were sufficient to cast me and all my posterity into utter ruin and destruction ; but, he being my singular good and favorable Prince, and my Lord Cardinal my good lord, hath, and doth clearly excuse me in thy lewd fact, and doth rather lament thy lightness, than malign me for the same, and hath devised an order to be taken for thee, to whom both thou and I be more bound then we be able well to consider : I pray to God, that this may be unto thee a sufficient admonition to use thyself more wisely hereafter ; for that, as I assure thee, if thou dost not amend thy prodigality, thou wilt be the last Earl of our house ; for, of thy natural inclination, thou art disposed to be wasteful and prodigal, and to consume all that thy progenitors have, with great travail gathered, and kept together with honor ; but loving the King's majesty, my singular good and gracious lord, I trust, I assure thee, so to order my succession, that ye shall con-

sume thereof but a little; for I do not intend, I tell thee truth, to make thee my heir; for, thanks be to God, I have more boys that, I trust, will prove much better, and use themselves more like world-wise and honest men, of whom I will choose the most likely to succeed me. Now, good masters and gentlemen, quoth he, unto us, it may be your chances hereafter, when I am dead, to see these things, that I have spoken to my son, prove so true as I speak them: yet, in the mean season, I desire you all to be his friends, and to tell him his fault when he doeth amiss, wherein ye shall show yourselves friendly unto him; and here, quoth he, I take my leave of you; and son, go your ways into my lord, your master, and attend upon him according to thy duty. And so he departed, and went his way, down the hall, into his barge."

In the meanwhile, a similar task was imposed on Sir Thomas Boleyn, who, however unwilling to relinquish such an ad-

vantageous connection, was equally prompt in obeying the king's wishes, and consented to withdraw his daughter from the court, without suffering a murmur to escape his lips. It was otherwise with Anne, who, naturally high spirited and ingenuous, could neither suppress nor conceal her resentment. She was, however, so far from penetrating the real cause of her disappointment, that she attributed it exclusively to the Cardinal's malicious interference; and, on leaving the palace, protested with an impetuosity which, fatally for herself, she never learnt to controul, that she would some day find the means to requite the injury.

CHAPTER V.

ANNE BOLEYN'S RETIREMENT AT HEVER CASTLE.

— RECALL TO COURT. — CELEBRATED BY SIR
THOMAS WIATT. — PROGRESS OF HENRY'S AT-
TACHMENT.

ON quitting the court, Anne Boleyn indignantly retired to her father's favorite residence, at Hever Castle.* The aspect of this

* Hever Castle, in Kent, derives its name from a Norman Baron, who, under Edward the Third, obtained the King's licence to embattle his manor-house. By his daughters it was conveyed to the families of Cobham and Brown. The former having acquired the whole by purchase, sold it to Geoffrey Boleyn. On the death of Sir Thomas Boleyn, in 1538, Henry, with matchless rapacity, claimed it in right of a wife, from whom, previous to her being beheaded, he had been divorced. The manor was afterwards settled on the Lady Anne of Cleves; after her death, granted to Sir Edward Waldegrave, from whose family it passed to the Humphreys, and finally to the family of the Medleys, in Sussex.

edifice, which had been originally built in the reign of Edward the Third, was venerable and imposing. In its moated walls, its Gothic turrets, and military drawbridge, might be traced the same stern features of feudal magnificence which reigned in the majestic towers of Wresil Castle, that ancient seat of the Percies, of which she had so lately hoped to become the mistress. The entrance to this mansion was by a gateway, flanked with round-towers, and protected by a portcullis ; but hospitality reigned within that mansion, of which the approach was rude and uninviting. The spacious hall recalled the image of baronial festivity, and on the windows of the long, winding gallery, Anne Boleyn might trace a series of heraldic honors, sufficiently illustrious to challenge alliance with the house of Percy. In her mother's right, she beheld the four-coated shield of Howard, Brotherton, Warren, and Mowbray ; whilst with still greater exultation

she traced the eight quarters of Hoo, St. Omer, Malmaims, Wickingham, St. Leger, Wallop, Ormond, that emblazoned her paternal escutcheon.* The wainscoted apartment which she occupied, with plain oaken pannels, is yet in existence. The long gallery she so often traversed with impatience, still seems to re-echo her steps; and after the vicissitudes of three centuries, the impression of her youth, her beauty, and singular destiny, remains fresh and vivid to the susceptible imagination. In reverting to the tragical history of the passions, we cease to measure the distance that separates us from a departed

* The armorial bearings of the Boleyns, with an additional shield of the Waldegraves, are still preserved on the windows of the castle. For Ormond, there is argent, three buckles, gules; a shield of four coats for Brotherton, Howard, Warren, Mowbray; a shield of eight coats for Bulleyn, Hoo, St. Omer, Malmaims, Wickingham, St. Leger, Wallop, Ormond. — Anne Boleyn's armorial bearings were originally — argent, a chevreux between three bulls' heads, coupéd sable. When she was created Marchioness of Pembroke, these were disused, and another was granted. — See Sandford's *Genealogical History of the Kings of England*.

age ; and whilst each surrounding object wears an antiquated aspect, we revert with lively interest to those records of suffering and feeling which can never become obsolete : the image of one, whose heart has long ceased to throb with human emotion, still speaks to our sympathies, and imperatively appeals to our pity or our justice.

The settlement of the Boleyns in this neighbourhood, originated with the prosperous citizen, Sir Geoffrey, who, not satisfied with having acquired the manor of Blickling, in Norfolk, secured to his heirs a retreat in Kent, by purchasing from the ancient family of the Grandisons the manor of Kemsing, including the villages of Hever, Scale, and Brocas. In the eyes of his successor, Sir William Boleyn, Rochford Hall possessed more attractions ; but Sir Thomas, who probably found his revenue inadequate to the support of that stately mansion, eagerly embraced every opportunity to extend his Kentish demesnes ; and

having exchanged with the King, New Hall, in Essex, for certain rights of property in this county, he enlarged the bounds of Hever Castle, embellished the surrounding plantations, and finally selected it for his principal residence. It has been already observed, that the prosperity of Sir Geoffrey Boleyn was not transmitted to his descendants in equal proportions. Of the numerous daughters of Sir William Boleyn, one alone was raised to the honors of nobility, by marrying the Marquis of Dorset. Of his sons, the second settled in Norfolk ; John entered the church ; whilst Edward, like his eldest brother, Thomas, aspired to preferment ; and having married Jane Dacre, the heiress of Sir John Tempest, obtained a place at court, and, with his wife, attended in the suit of Henry and Catharine, at Guisnes.* Although the harmony of these

* See Pedigree in the Appendix. Lady Edward Boleyn, afterwards Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Anne Boleyn, appears to have been envious of her niece's advancement.

two brothers appears not to have been interrupted, it was otherwise with their respective consorts, the Lady Edward, and the Lady Elizabeth Boleyn, in whose distaste to her sister-in-law, Anne is said to have strongly participated. Nor was much cordiality preserved in their intercourse with the Howards, since the name of Boleyn is not discovered in the list of visitors, whose names are preserved among the domestic archives of Tendring Hall.* It is not surprising that the reign of Henry the Eighth should have been fruitful in examples of unnatural hostility, among the nearest domestic connections. The atmosphere of his court was little favorable to the growth of those benevolent or tender affections, which never flourish amidst the

* The chief residence of Thomas Earl of Surrey, afterwards Duke of Norfolk. An account-book is still extant, in which is a list of the visitors, with an account of every day's fare. See Nott's Life of Surrey.

perpetual alarms of jealousy, rivalry, and competition. The preferment that depends on the caprice of an arbitrary individual must often be unjustly withheld, or unworthily bestowed. Irritated by care and chagrin, the disappointed become suspicious, — the persecuted imbibe the spirit of malignity, — the desire of vengeance constitutes the hope and the solace of despair. Neither the ties of blood, nor the sympathies of friendship afford protection from those baser passions incident to a state of moral and political degradation.

Whilst Anne Boleyn was repining in exile, the situation of her lover was still more painful. It was not enough that he had been separated from the woman he adored. To satisfy the King's despotic passion, he must be compelled to pledge his faith to another bride; and finally the Lady Mary Talbot, the youthful daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury, was forced on his reluctant acceptance. The authority of his

sovereign, or the pusillanimity of his father, prevailed over fidelity and love ; and at the moment that his high-spirited mistress indulged dreams of hope and happiness, she was suddenly stunned by the intelligence, that Lord Percy was really married. It is easy to conceive how acutely she felt, how bitterly she resented, the injury ; with what vehemence she accused the unfaithful lover, whose facility must have incurred contempt, even more than Wolsey or Henry had provoked abhorrence. Anne was of that ardent temper, which is too often betrayed to violence and injustice ; but her resentments, though keen, were not permanent, nor could she be classed with those wary dissemblers, who brood over real or imaginary wrongs in vindictive silence. At this moment there is no reason to believe she divined the true source of her disappointment : even her father's sagacity appears not to have penetrated the mystery ; and he pro-

bably attributed the royal interposition solely to that spirit of domination which he had long remarked in his jealous sovereign's character, of whom it was too justly predicted, that he would not scruple to *strike off even a favorite's head, if it obstructed his views of advantage.**

According to local tradition †, however, the mist vanished from his eyes, when he suddenly saw the King arrive by stealth at Hever, on some frivolous pretext, which ill disguised his real errand, that he came but to steal a glimpse of the lovely Anne Boleyn. Alarmed by this marked attention, Sir Thomas is said to have sedulously

* A saying of Sir Thomas More, in reply to the congratulation of his son-in-law, Roper, on his having received a visit from the King, who walked with him in his garden at Chelsea, putting his arm round his neck, and leaning familiarly on his shoulder: "I thank the King's Grace," said More; "but albeit he is a gracious prince, if my head could win him a castle in France, it would not long be on these shoulders."

† See the account of Hever Castle, in Hasted's, Kent.

withdrawn his daughter from the King's view, and during his visit, on the plea of indisposition, to have kept her confined to her chamber. Whatever credit be attached to this tale, it is certain that a considerable time intervened before Anne resumed her place at court *; and that her father, created Lord Viscount Rochford, was advanced to the office of treasurer of the royal household. By this elevation, however, no sinister suspicion could be awakened, since the long and faithful services of Sir Thomas Boleyn might have challenged a more liberal recompense; and even envy was silenced by a liberal distri-

* See Cavendish, whose authority is quoted by Lord Herbert, and tacitly referred to by Bishop Godwin. It is also worthy of remark, that many of the details respecting Anne Boleyn, originally supplied by the former writer, who is well known to have been gentleman-usher to Cardinal Wolsey, are substantiated by the MS. of another gentleman resident in the family, which has been lately published in the Appendix of Dr. Nott's Life of Sir Thomas Wiatt.

bution of similar favors on other courtiers. In the number of these new peers were two royal children; of whom the one, the offspring of the French Queen and the Duke of Suffolk, was created Earl of Lincoln; and the other, Henry's own son by Lady Tallbois, exalted to the dignity of Duke of Richmond and Somerset; an elevation by which he rather evinced fondness for his offspring, than respect for his people.

Nor was it only in his own person that Sir Thomas Boleyn tasted of royal munificence: his son-in-law, Sir William Carey, was advanced to the post of gentleman of the privy chamber. Descended from an ancient family in Devonshire, this gentleman possessed hereditary claims on the gratitude of the House of Lancaster: his father had fought under its banner, till, by the fatal chance of war, falling into the hands of the Yorkists, he was ignominiously dragged from the sanctuary to the scaffold.

Of his two sons, John, the elder, succeeded to the patrimonial demesnes*; whilst William, the younger, was, like Charles Brandon, patronised at court, and placed as an esquire about the King's person. In this situation it was his fortune to win the hand (contrary to her mother's will) of Mary Boleyn, whose fair blooming complexion, and light-brown tresses, are said to have sometimes wrested from her sister the prize of beauty.†

* Cockington, in Devonshire.—Sir John Carey was the progenitor of the celebrated Lucius Lord Falkland, who evinced such generous loyalty to Charles the First.

† A portrait of this lady is in existence at Warwick Castle. Mary Boleyn is always mentioned by historians as the younger sister; and, supposing Anne to have been born in 1507, must have married very early. Sanders, indeed, pretends that she was many years older than Anne, and had been previously seduced by Henry; but of this he can adduce no other proof than two or three declamatory passages in Cardinal Pole's letters, in which the absence of fact is attempted to be supplied by invective. It was obviously the object of the Catholic party to fix on Henry such suspicions as must invalidate the scriptural arguments in favor

At length Anne Boleyn was recalled to court; a summons that, it may be presumed, she awaited with impatience, not so much

of his divorce. From a passage in one of Henry's letters to Anne Boleyn, it should seem that this Mary Boleyn, whose first husband died in 1528, had by some indiscretions forfeited her mother's regard: nothing therefore could be more apt for the fabrication of the calumny afterwards obtruded on notice; which, when coolly examined, is too preposterous to require refutation. Is it possible to believe, that Anne Boleyn would have been exposed by her parents to that seduction, which to her sister had already proved fatal? To suppose this, would almost be paramount to an admission of the disgusting story fabricated by Sanders, which even Cardinal Pole leaves unsupported. It is pretended, that Mary Boleyn, instigated by envy of her sister Anne's triumph, apprised Queen Catharine of her own intrigue, and that she consequently became the object of that sister's hatred; but it appears from the correspondence, that Henry himself, at the request of Anne, promised to intercede with her father to assist Mary Boleyn after her husband's death. By Sir William Carey she had two children: a son, who became Baron Hunsdon; and a daughter, who was married to Sir Philip Knolles. Mary Boleyn's second husband was Sir William Stafford. See Appendix.

because she sighed for pleasure, as because she longed to evince, by the gaiety of her deportment, that she esteemed not her former lover worthy of regret. At this period, it was scarcely possible she should have entertained for Henry any favorable sentiments : it may be doubted whether she even regarded, with complacency, the domestic tyrant, who already neglected that Queen, for whom, if we may credit her encomiastic biographer *, she was disposed to feel sincere attachment. Under other circumstances, she might have admired his majestic form, his animated countenance, and gallant deportment ; but she could not easily forget that he had opposed her elevation, scarcely could she forgive that he had disparaged her alliance ; and it may reasonably be supposed, that resentment lurked even in the smiles with which she met the King's expres-

* Wiatt.

sive looks of passionate admiration. In Henry's court, she might also have discovered many men more accomplished than her despotic sovereign. At the very opening of his reign there had been a dawn of improvement, of which the progress was already perceptible : the nobility were then celebrated as the patrons of letters ; they were now more honorably distinguished as the ornaments of literature ; many of them were ambitious of literary eminence, and not a few deservedly admitted to literary fame.* The love of classical learning had revived in the clergy, by whose authority schools and colleges for the education of youth were raised, on the very site of monastic establishments. It is worthy of remark, that almost all Henry's satellites, however dis-

* Bouchier Lord Berners translated Froissart's *Chronicles* ; Parker Lord Morley left several poems : these were the precursors of George Boleyn, Wiatt, and the incomparable Surrey.

similar in their habits, or their vocations, were confessedly men of approved diplomatic ability. To the Duke of Suffolk, the Earl of Worcester, and Sir Edward Poinings, were awarded the first honors in jousting. Audley *, Wriothesley †, and

* After the death of Sir Thomas More, Sir Thomas Audley became chancellor, who appears to have been an excellent time-server. He supported the King's prerogative in parliament, and consulted the inclinations of the Queen-consort at court ; choosing rather, according to Loyd, the *expedient than the lawful*.

“ He enforced six bills against the clergy ; 1. the extortion of their courts ; 2. the exaction of their crops and mortuaries ; 3. their worldly occupations, as grazing, tanning ; 4. their merchandise ; 5. their non-residence ; 6. their pluralities. When custom was urged in favor of these abuses, Sir Thomas Audley replied, “ The usage hath ever been for thieves to rob at Shooter's Hill ; is it therefore lawful ? ”

† Thomas Wriothesley, afterwards Earl of Southampton, was born in the Barbican. Loyd praises him extravagantly ; but that he was detested as the instrument of Henry's cruelty and oppression, appears from the following lines, written by one of the Earl of Surrey's friends :—

From vile estate, of base and low degree,
By false deceit by, craft, and subtle ways ;

Fineux *, acquired pre-eminence at the bar ; but (with the exception of Sir Anthony Cooke †) there was scarcely one of

Of mischief mould, and key of cruelty,
 Was crept full high, borne up by sundry staves ;
 Picture of pride, of papistry the plat,
 In whom treason as in a throne did sit,
 With ireful eye, or glearing like a cat ;
 Killing by spight whom he thought fit to hit ;
 This day is dead, — his soul is down to hell.

Nott's Life of Surrey.

* Sir John Fineux, born at Swinkfield, in Kent, of obscure origin ; he had engraven on his sergeant's ring the motto, "*Suæ quisque fortunæ faber* ;" and it was his saying, " that no man thrived, but he that lived as if he were the first man in the world, and his father were not born before him." Forty years (says Loyd) he lived by industry. Under Henry the Seventh he was a patriot ; and having resisted the imposition of the penny tax, the King, respecting or fearing his talents, made him a judge, and showered on him preferment. Sir John Fineux appears to have improved every advantage ; since he married a rich wife, and was steward for one hundred and twenty-nine manors. The most honorable part of his character is, that he opposed the exactions of Empson and Dudley.

† Sir Anthony Cooke, of mercantile extraction, was born at Giddy Hall, in Essex. His daughter

his confidants who had pretensions to celebrity, but had been engaged in foreign embassies, and negotiations. This peculiarity may in part be referred to Henry's predilection for employing men of talents, whom he had drawn from indigence and obscurity. Aware of this trait in his character, it became the business of his confidants and favourites, to discover suitable objects of royal patronage ; and as a course of continental travelling was essential to a liberal education, it was customary to send

Mildred was married to Cecil, the Lord Treasurer ; his daughter Anne to Nicholas Bacon Lord Chancellor ; like Sir Thomas More, he determined to qualify his daughters to become companions to men of sense. Lord Seymour was so much struck with his method of instruction, that he recommended him to be the tutor of his nephew Edward. During Queen Mary's reign, this wise and excellent man lived in the retirement best suited to his taste : he appears to have possessed all the amiable domestic affections of Sir Thomas More, without his religious bigotry or singularity.

each of these young probationers, with an adequate pension * to France, Italy, or Germany, on the single condition, — that they should maintain with the minister a private circumstantial correspondence, by

* According to Loyd, the pension allowed was 125*l.* per year. Speaking of Peters, he adds, “ his tutor is assigned, who had been there before, and could instruct him what he should see, where he should go, what acquaintance to entertain, what exercise or discipline to undergo ; his instructions were drawn up, as that he should keep a diary of what the chiefest places, and the eminent persons, either apart or in conventions, yielded worthy of remark, and observation ; to have before him a map or chart of every place he goeth to ; not to stay long in any place ; to converse with no Englishman, but agents, ambassadors, or such brave persons as his majesty would direct him to ; to endeavour after recommendations from persons of quality in one place to those in another ; keeping still his correspondence with the most public and eminent persons of every respective place.” It is added, “ that within five years he returned, the complete gentleman ; correcting the vices of one country with the virtues of another, and being one happy composition of every region.” This Peters, also, was a native of Devonshire, born at Exeter, whence he was sent to Allsouls-college. Sir Thomas Boleyn chose him to be his son’s tutor.

which he was enabled to form a correct opinion of their comparative talents, and discretion. Of the youths thus trained, many arrived at the first honors of the state, and all acquired a polish of manner, and an aptness in conversation, which rendered them the ornaments of society. Henry had, at his accession, found but one lawyer in the privy council. In this respect, he deviated wisely from his father's system : under Wolsey's active superintendence, the forensic profession rose in general estimation ; and the bar became the nursery of the senate and the council.

It is remarkable, that Sir Thomas More and Sir Anthony Cooke coincided in their ideas on the subject of female education, and harmonised in their views of domestic felicity. Among the more illustrious courtiers, there were some who still remained to support the dignity and splendor of the throne : of these, Sir Edward Poinings, who had been elected one of the presiding

judges of the tournament at Guisnes, was the bravest cavalier, and Sir John Russell, Earl of Bedford, the most accomplished gentleman. Of the numerous diplomatists, Dr. Wotton* and Sir Thomas Boleyn were constantly in requisition. Sir William Paget attracted most esteem abroad; and Sir Robert Morison†, “who was equally alert

* Dr. Wotton went on thirteen embassies to foreign princes; a man of singular wisdom and modesty. Henry the Eighth once said to him, “Sir, I have sent a head by Cromwell, a purse by Wolsey, a sword by Brandon, and I must now send the law by *you*, to treat with my enemies.”—“Many,” says Loyd, “envied this happy man; but none could do without him, who could sum up the merit of any cause, recollect the circumstances of any affair, and show tables of trade, commerce, situation, revenue, interest, the readiest and exactest of any in England.” Wotton appears to have possessed a happy facility in his religious opinions; since he had the favour of Henry, the confidence of the council; belonged to Mary’s junta, and to Elizabeth’s statesmen.

† Sir R. Morison was distinguished by the superior elegance of his Latin discourses. Tall and majestic, he was precisely such a man as Henry the Eighth wished to make his representative.

in a dance, a tourney, and a treaty, gained most favor at home." Nor must mention be omitted of Sir Ralph Sadler, the only one, if we may believe the epigrammatic Loyd, in whose favor Henry the Eighth waved his objection to little men.*

In adverting to the learned and ingenious men of the day, it might be invidious to overlook poets and authors, were they not almost uniformly identified with scholars and theologians. That our native literature was still neglected, is evident ; since Sir Thomas More, and many other ingenious men, continued to write in a language

* Sir Ralph Sadler was born at Hackney : he became the retainer of Cromwell, who had been the servant of Wolsey, and was by Henry appointed secretary of state. Versatility and activity were his distinguishing qualities : he knew how to fight and to write ; and was equally able as a civilian and a negociator. When this knight attended Cromwell to Rome, his servant kindly purchased a pardon for the sins of his master and all his descendants, to the third generation.—See Fuller and Loyd.

familiar only to the learned reader. The living spring of English poetry, at which Chaucer had slaked his thirst for immortality, was neglected — almost forgotten. Skelton * was the fashionable poet, whose uncouth rhymes, owed their point and their popularity rather to malice than to † wit. Of the ancient minstrelsy some relics still existed in fragments of ballads or songs, of which the pathos and simplicity bespoke a welcome from every heart.

Amidst this desolation of the native muse, it was reserved for two or three young men, of gentle blood and liberal fortune, to rebuild the altars and restore the schools of English poetry. Of these, the most active and successful were Sir Thomas Wyatt and the Earl of Surrey, the

* The poet laureat: who, although he satyriized Wolsey, panegyriized the customs and manners of the female nobility.

† Hawes was also popular; as was Barclay, the translator of Argenis.

one the cousin, the other the impassioned admirer, of Anne Boleyn.

In the education of Wiatt was included whatever was held to be necessary to the formation of an accomplished gentleman. His early childhood had been devoted to classical studies, and gymnastic exercises. At eighteen he travelled, and at twenty returned to England, endowed with every personal and mental quality that could excite the envy of one sex, or inspire enthusiasm in the other. From his cradle he had been destined for the court : his father, Sir Henry Wiatt, descended from an ancient Kentish family, having filled with reputation several departments in the royal household, easily obtained for his son the appointment of gentleman of the privy chamber ; but the young poet was formed for better things. Born on the banks of the Medway, he had spent his early childhood at Allington Castle, amidst such romantic scenery, as, when nature has given

sensibility, affords healthful nourishment to the poetical character. His education was not only suited to his station, but happily calculated to elicit his talents. In devouring the classical pages of Greece and Rome, he imbibed the spirit, he received the vaticidal inspiration which is only to be communicated or received by kindred genius. His first efforts were made in Latin verse ; but observing that France and Italy possessed living poets, and a national lay, he patriotically resolved to dedicate his pen to the restoration of English literature, and to devote his ambition to the honour of his country.

Wiatt is first mentioned by the court-chroniclers in 1525, when he was promoted, with William Carey, already mentioned, to the rank of Gentleman of the Privy Chamber ; and according to the custom of the day, exhibited his prowess and his gallantry in a tourney and a masque, with which the King was well satisfied. At this

spectacle Anne Boleyn appears not to have been present ; and as Wiatt notoriously held in contempt these puerile entertainments*, he was, perhaps, little disposed to relish his official duties, till they were soothed and enlivened by her presence. At what precise time they became acquainted is not known ; but he has recorded in a short poem the impressions which he received, and accompanied his description of her countenance with an intimation that he would fain be at liberty to bind himself to her for ever. †

* Wiatt, being once pressed by Henry to appear at a masque, replied, " Truly a man is not so wise by day, that he should play the fool at night."

† " The knight, in the beginning, coming to behold the sudden appearance of this new bewtie, came to be holden and surprised somewhat with the sight thereof. After much more, with her graceful and wittie speeches, his eare also had been chained to her, so as finally his heart seemed to say, ' I could gladly yield to be tied for ever with the knot of her love,' as somewhere in his verses he has been thought to express." — See the Life of Queen Anne Bolen.

Unfortunately, by the care of a provident father, the poet had been tied to the daughter of Lord Cobham, at an age when he could neither form a rational choice, nor hope to inspire a lasting attachment ; but this circumstance precluded not his addressing another lady in the language of Platonic love. There were few young beauties who were not, or who sought not to be, the objects of a fictitious passion, often assumed from motives of vanity, or policy, according to the worldly situation of the respective parties. Under the fanciful names of Mistress and Servant, ample licence was allowed to breathe sentiments of a more tender nature : nor, by this, so long as the female party should remain unmarried, was the least injury offered to her reputation. Till that period, it was her undoubted privilege, like Chaucer's *Æmilia*, to tolerate the adoration of contending knights, and accept the oblations of un-

numbered suitors; to listen to vows she was expected to condemn; to accept of gifts not to be repaid; to authorise efforts and sacrifices never to be requited;—all this was permitted to a beauty, without attaint or blemish to her maiden fame: but if she once allowed herself to depart from the passive system that custom prescribed to her sex,—if she suffered her champion to wear in public some token of her special favor, as a ribbon, a glove, or any other memorial of tender attachment,—from that moment her discretion was compromised, her character impeached; such concessions being authorised only when the suitor was an honorable lover, to whom she was eventually to pledge her faith at the hymeneal altar.

Accustomed from infancy to the language of adulation, Anne Boleyn was not disposed, even for such a man as Wiatt, to outstep the limits of female decorum. She could not, however, be displeased to

see herself distinguished by one of the most attractive and accomplished men of the age; and was perhaps rather tempted to invite than to reject his flattering attentions. Proud of the songs she inspired, she might, perhaps, have sympathised in the feelings they expressed, had not discretion found an auxiliary in pride, and ambition fortified those sentiments of honor which she unquestionably possessed. But we are told that “ though she rejected all his speech of love, it was in such a sort as whatsoever tended to regard of her honor, she shewed not to scorn. For the general favor and goodwill she perceived all men to bear him, which might the rather occasion others to turn their looks to that in her, which a man of his worth was wrought to gaze at.” *

It was impossible but that the society of such a man as Wiatt should have essentially

* Wiatt's Queen Anne Bolen.

contributed to the developement of her talents and taste; and it was from him, probably, rather than the Queen of Navarre, that she imbibed her partiality for the new opinions. .It cannot be said that Wiatt was the partisan of Luther: his opinions were rather derived from Wickliffe, and the elder reformers, who had detected the corruptions, and resisted the usurpations of the Romish hierarchy. Without investigating the subject as a theologian, Wiatt had an intuitive conviction, that infallibility could not reside in any individual, or assembly of individuals, and that the enormous prerogatives which under these pretensions had been assumed and exercised, were founded on superstition and usurpation. To his acute discernment, no argument could be necessary to enforce the conviction, that the influence of an unmarried body of clergy, an order of men bound to society by none of its domestic

charities and affections, was inimical to the morals and happiness of the community. As an Englishman, he indignantly disclaimed that allegiance to any foreign potentate implied in the rights of papal supremacy, and which he held to be subversive of national dignity and independence. Thus the heresy of Wiatt originated in patriotism, and he gloried in resisting the the Pope, and in proclaiming the freedom of his country.

Against Wolsey, as the gigantic Atlas that upheld the ponderous fabric of ecclesiastical power, he cherished an acrimony of feeling, (strikingly contrasted with the amenity of his general character *,) which, perhaps, conspired with his fine qualities

* Such was Wiatt's benevolence, that he delighted to recommend another to notice and favor; and so many were indebted to his good offices with the King, that, on occasion of any sudden preferment, it became the current saying, "that such-an-one had been in Sir Thomas Wiatt's closet."

to make a favorable impression on Anne Boleyn. Of all who approached her, Wiatt appears to have been most worthy to win her confidence ; though a poet and a courtier, he despised the arts of flattery, and the sinister meanness of adulation. Many of his witticisms have been transmitted to us ; but amongst them we find not a single compliment addressed to his lady or his sovereign. The independence and originality of his mind, communicated to his sentiments an energy almost irresistible ; and whether he conversed with the youthful Earl of Surrey, with the accomplished George Boleyn, or with his beloved sister, he was to each and to all a monitor, a guardian, and a dictator. In the progress of their romantic intimacy, the *professed servant* appears to have insensibly become the *real* friend ; and thus an intercourse originating in frivolous gallantry, was exalted into an honorable and faithful attachment.

In the mean while, Henry, no indif-

ferent observer of Anne Boleyn's movements, shortly after her return to court, had taken an opportunity to present to her a valuable jewel, which was accepted and worn without reserve.* No impropriety was attached to such attentions: on various occasions, it was even a point of etiquette for the cavalier to offer gifts to the lady whom he admired or celebrated, *pro tempore*, as his *mistress*.† Even the repetition of such favors was not alarming to virgin modesty; and whether Anne divined or mistook the King's purpose, she affected to be wholly free from suspicion. But when, encouraged by this forbearance, Henry ventured on an undisguised avowal of his passion, she replied with scorn, in the

* Sanders, Heylin, &c.

† This custom long continued to be prevalent during certain public festivals. In the time of Cromwell, Whitelock, after the manner of an English cavalier with his mistress, gave a treat to Queen Christina of Sweden, on May-day.

words of Lady Elizabeth Grey, that “she “ was too good to be a King’s mistress.”* Apologies and concessions followed; and, finally, the haughty Henry was content to enter the list with Wiatt and other obsequious admirers, as her cavalier and servant. The following minute detail of these Platonic rivals offers a curious picture of polite society at the commencement of the sixteenth century.†

* Anne’s rejection of the King’s (first dishonorable) overture, is mentioned both by her advocate Heylin, and her calumniator Sanders.

† Nothing like precision or accuracy is attempted in the traditional little work, from which this passage is extracted. But the anecdotes it contains appear to have been originally furnished by Sir Thomas Wiatt and his contemporaries. In the middle of the seventeenth century, they were collected by one of his descendants, but without the least attention to chronological arrangement. It is therefore impossible to ascertain at what period the King presented the ring to Anne Boleyn; a ceremony which, had it been performed before witnesses, would have been equivalent to a formal betrothment. It will, however, be found, that the statement of Wiatt is confirmed by the testimony

“ About this time, it is said, that the knight (Wiatt) entertanyng talk with her, as she was earnest at work, and sportinge-wise caught from her a certin small jewel, hanginge by a lace out of her pocket, or otherwise loose, which he thrust into his bosom; neither with any earnest request could she obtain it from him againe: he kept it, therefore, and wore it after about his neck under his cassoque, promising to himself either to have it with her favor, or as an occasion to have talk with her, wherin he had singular delight; and she after seemed not to make much reconinge of it, either the thinge not beinge much worth, or not woorth much strivinge for. The noble prince having

even of those foreign and English writers who have most laboured to traduce her reputation; and it is remarkable that Bp. Burnet, to whom he appears to have been personally known, in his history of the reformation, refers to this identical manuscript, and in his refutation of Sanders, quotes his authority.

a watchful eie upon the knight, noting him more to hover about the lady, and she more to keepe aloof of him, was whetted the more to discover to her his affection, so as rather, he liked first to try, of what temper the regard of her honor was, which he finding not any way to be tainted with those things his kingly majestie and means could bring to the batterie, he in the end fell to win her by treaty of marriage; and in this talk took from her a ring, and that ware upon his littel finger; and yet al this with such a secresie was carried, and on her part so wisely, as none, or verie few, esteemed this other than an ordinarie cours of dalliance. Within few daise after, it happened that the king, sporting himself at bowles, had in his company, as it falls out, divers noblemen and other courtiers of account; amongst whom might be the Duke of Suffolk, Sir F. Brian, and Sir T. Wyatt; himself being more than ordinarie pleasantly disposed, and in his game takinge

an occasion to affirm a cast to be his, that plainly appeared to be otherwise ; those on the other side sayed, with his grace's leave they thought not ; and yet stil he, pointinge with his finger whereon he ware her ringe, replied often, it was his, especially to the knight, he said, ‘ Wyat, I tel thee, it is *mine*,’ smiling upon him withal. Sir Thomas, at the lengthe, casting his eye upon the king's finger, perceived that the king ment the lady, whose ring that was which he wel knew, and paused a littel ; and finding the kinge bent to pleasure, after the words repeated again by the kinge, the knight replied, and if it may like your majestie to give me leave to measure it, I hope it will be *mine*, and withal took from his neck the lase, whereat hung the tablet, and therewith stooped to measure the caste which the king espiunge knew, and had seen her wear ; and withal sporned away the bowle, and said, ‘ It may be so ; but then, I am deceived,’ and so broke up the

game. This thing, thus carried, was not perceived of many, but of some few it was. Now the king resortinge to his chamber, shewing some resentment in his countenance, found means to break this matter to the lady, who with good and evident prooffe how the knight came by the jewel, satisfied the king so effectually, that this more confirmed the king's opinion of her truth and virtue, than himself at the first could have expected."*

The correspondence of Henry with Anne Boleyn enables us more distinctly to trace the progress of their courtship. The three

* On the circumstance related in this anecdote appears to have been founded the ridiculous story, quoted from Sanders, by several French and Spanish writers, and repeated by Davanzati in his *Schisma d'Inghilterra*; in which it is pretended, that Wiatt confessed to King Henry, that he had carried on a criminal intrigue with Anne Boleyn. It is often the fate of calumny to confute itself; had Wiatt ever made this impudent avowal, it is impossible that Henry should have allowed him to remain at court; where, however, he continued in great favor, long after Anne's coronation.

following letters appear to have been written in an initial stage of the connection, almost before Henry had shaped to himself a definite object, or Anne thought it prudent to confide in his unqualified professions of attachment. *

* By the agency of some treacherous domestic, these letters were stolen from Anne Boleyn's cabinet, and conveyed to the Vatican at Rome; where they were detected by Bp. Burnet, who procured a copy, afterwards published in the Harleian Miscellany, the editor of which, in attempting to fix the precise period at which they were written, falls into the mistake of Burnet, in assuming as a fact, that Anne Boleyn came not into England until the year 1527; and that these letters were all written in 1528. Without reiterating the arguments already adduced to prove that Anne must have come to England many years sooner, it is easy to discover, that the letters were not written consecutively, but at different intervals, and on various occasions. In the four which are here introduced, no allusion is made to the legate, so often mentioned in the others; whence it may fairly be presumed, that they were antecedent to the negotiation respecting the divorce.

LETTER I.

*(Translated from the French.)**

My mistress and friend;—I and my heart put ourselves into your hands, begging you to recommend us to your favor, and not to let absence lessen your affection to us. For it were great pity to increase our pain, which absence alone does sufficiently, and more than I could ever have thought; bringing to my mind a point of astronomy, which is, that the farther the Mores† are from us, the farther too is the sun, and yet his heat is the more scorching: so it is with our love; we are at a distance from one another, and yet it keeps its fer-

* See the original French at the end of the volume.

† The inexplicability of this passage ought perhaps to be attributed to some blunder in the transcriber; since Henry, though often pedantic, is on other occasions perfectly intelligible. The original letters in Henry's own hand are still extant in the Vatican, to which they were restored after the re-establishment of the Bourbons in France.

vency, at least on my side. I hope the like on your part, assuring you, that the uneasiness of absence is already too severe for me ; and when I think of the continuance of that, which I must of necessity suffer, it would seem intolerable to me, were it not for the firm hope I have of your unchangeable affection for me ; and now, to put you sometimes in mind of it, and seeing I cannot be present in person with you, I send you the nearest thing to that possible, that is, my picture set in bracelets, with the whole device, which you know already, wishing myself in their place, when it shall please you. This from the hand of

Your servant and friend,

H. Rex.

LETTER II.

To my mistress ;

Because the time seems to me very long, since I have heard from you, or concerning your health ; the great affection I have for you has obliged me to send this bearer to be better informed, both of your health and pleasure, particularly, because, since my last parting with you, I have been told, that you have entirely changed the opinion in which I left you, and that you would neither come to court with your mother, nor any other way ; which report, if true, I cannot enough wonder at, being persuaded in my own mind, that I have never committed any offence against you ; and it seems a very small return for the great love I bear you, to be kept at a distance from the person and presence of the woman in the world that I value the most ; and, if you love me with as much affection as I hope you do, I am sure, the distance of our

two persons would be a little uneasy to you. Though this does not belong so much to the mistress as the servant, consider well, my mistress, how greatly your absence grieves me ; I hope it is not your will that it should be so ; but, if I heard for certain, that you yourself desired it, I could do no other than complain of my ill fortune, and by degrees abate my great folly ; and so, for want of time, I make an end of my rude letter, desiring you to give credit to this bearer in all he will tell you from me. Written by the hand of your entire servant.

LETTER III.

• By turning over in my thoughts the contents of your last letters, I have put myself into a great agony, not knowing how to understand them, whether to my

disadvantage, as I understand some others, or not; I beseech you now, with the greatest earnestness, to let me know your whole intention, as to the love between us two. For I must of necessity obtain this answer of you, having been above a whole year struck with the dart of love, and not yet sure whether I shall fail, or find a place in your heart and affection. This uncertainty has hindered me of late from naming you my mistress, since you only love me with an ordinary affection; but if you please to do the duty of a true and loyal mistress, and to give up yourself, body and heart, to me, who will be, as I have been, your most loyal servant, (if your rigor does not forbid me), I promise you that not only the name shall be given you, but also that I will take you for my mistress, casting off all others that are in competition with you, out of my thoughts and affection, and serving you only. I beg you to give an entire answer to this my rude

letter, that I may know on what and how far I may depend. But, if it does not please you to answer me in writing, let me know some place where I may have it by word of mouth, and I will go thither with all my heart. No more, for fear of tiring you. Written by the hand of him, who would willingly remain yours,

II. Rex.

LETTER IV.

To the same.

For a present so valuable, that nothing could be more, (considering the whole of it,) I return you my most hearty thanks, not only on account of the costly diamond, and the ship in which the solitary damsel is tossed about ; but chiefly for the fine interpretation, and too humble submission

which your goodness hath made to me. For I think it would be very difficult for me to find an occasion to deserve it, if I was not assisted by your great humanity and favor, which I have sought, do seek, and will always seek to preserve by all the services in my power, and this is my firm intention and hope, according to the motto, *aut illic aut nullibi* (either here or no where). The demonstrations of your affections are such, the fine thoughts of your letter so cordially expressed, that they oblige me for ever to honor, love, and serve you sincerely, beseeching you to continue in the same firm and constant purpose; and assuring you, that, on my part, I will not only make you a suitable return, but outdo you in loyalty of heart, if it be possible. I desire you also, that, if at any time before this I have in any sort offended you, you would give me the same absolution that you ask, assuring you, that hereafter my heart shall be dedicated to you alone. I

wish my body was so too : God can do it, if he pleases, to whom I pray once a-day for that end ; hoping, that at length, my prayers will be heard. I wish the time may be short ; but I shall think it long, till we shall see one another. Written by the hand of the secretary, who, in heart, body, and will, is

Your loyal,

And most assured servant.

From these letters it is evident, that Henry not only loved but esteemed his mistress. Impressed with admiration and respect for her mental endowments, he displays all his wit and learning, conscious that he is addressing one by whom they will be duly appreciated. In the course of this correspondence, Henry is said to have declared his intentions to the lady's father, " to whom," adds the biographer, " we

may be assured, the newes was not a littel joyful." By Anne herself, however, if we may credit his assertion, the persuasion was admitted with reluctance : " she stood stil upon her guard, and was not, as we would suppose, so easily taken with al this apparance of happines : whereof two things appeared to be the causes ; the one the love she bare ever to the Queen, whom she served, that was also a personage of greate virtue ; the other, her conceit, that ther was not that freedom of conjunction with one that was her lord and King, as with one more agreeable to her."

Allowing for the exaggerations of an encomiast, it is impossible to withhold from Anne Boleyn the praise of consummate prudence and discretion. By her father, she had probably been apprised of the rumor already prevailing on the Continent, that Henry intended to solicit the Pope for a divorce, on the plea of having contracted an illegal marriage : if ~~this were~~

true, Anne might with plausibility aspire to the throne ; if it were false, she should at least preserve her self respect, and escape the contempt invariably attached to frailty. A high sense of moral and religious duty might have impelled her to reject the boon, that must be purchased by invading another's right, — to renounce an honor never to be obtained without ingratitude and injustice. But it should be remembered, that the character of Anne was not formed on the pure simplicity of gospel precepts ; nor had she learnt, like the daughters of a Cooke or a More, to place her happiness in intellectual pursuits, and the endearments of domestic affection. Images of splendor and greatness were the objects first presented to her infant eyes ; and it was one of the earliest lessons imprinted on her mind, that they could scarcely be obtained at too dear a price.

In that age of mingled profligacy and superstition, the beauties of the court seldom

escaped reproach.* Anne aspired to the praise of unblemished chastity, and in this distinction, with reason, triumphed. If she identified pride with dignity, or mistook the impulses of vanity and ambition for the aspirations of piety and virtue, she had unhappily the whole corps of English nobility to sanction and confirm the delusion ; and candor demands that her actions be judged according to the same moral standard, by which praise or blame is measured to her rivals and contemporaries.

It was not long before Catharine perceived the secret intelligence between her husband and her attendant, whom she often challenged to play with her at cards, in the royal presence ; willing, as was supposed †, to give the enamoured Prince an opportunity of contemplating the supplemental

* The injured Duchess of Norfolk, in complaining of her husband's cruelty and infidelity, observes, that she had lived fifteen years at court, and, in all that time, preserved her reputation.

† Wiat.

nail, which, to her prejudiced eyes, appeared an ominous deformity. On one of these occasions, Catharine, by a sort of caustic pleasantry, alluded to their mutual situation. In the game at which she was playing with Anne Boleyn, it was a rule, in dealing the cards, to stop on turning up the king or queen: it happened that the maid of honor stopt more than once on producing the king, which Catharine remarking, exclaimed, “ My Lady Anne, “ you have good luck to stop at a king: “ but you are not like others; you will “ have all or none.”* In general the Queen treated her with the utmost courtesy and respect; partly, as she afterwards acknowledged, because she was determined by her forbearing gentleness, to deprive Henry of every pretext for complaint, and partly because she hoped by complaisance to retain some little hold on his affections. In reality, her mild submission

* Wiat.

appears for a considerable time to have disarmed the violence of Henry's impetuous temper; and, but for some peculiar circumstances, might, perhaps, have obtained the victory, even over a feeling ardent as that inspired by Anne Boleyn.

It is well known, that the strong and unchangeable passion of Henry's soul was to transmit the crown to his immediate posterity. From childhood, he had bestowed gratuitous hatred on all who approached the verge of a disputable succession. As his despotism increased, his suspicions redoubled: even the feeble claims of Buckingham had aroused his jealous vengeance; and in this view, Yorkists and Lancastrians became equally the objects of his abhorrence. Sensible that a female must carry the succession into another family, he had long passionately desired a male heir, through whom the supremacy of the Tudor line might be triumphantly perpetuated, and whose claim should silence competition,

and compel allegiance. Unused to constraint or opposition, he contemplated, with fretful impatience, the reiterated disappointment of his favourite object : and since the blessing he asked in vain was denied to no other prince in Europe, he began to regard, with superstitious aversion, the consort from whom he no longer hoped to obtain its accomplishment.

The state of his feelings had been long since divulged to Wolsey, who, guessing his aim, in 1524, published, by virtue of his legatine mandate, the Pope's Bull against marriages contracted within forbidden degrees. Whether Henry's secret solicitude was in some degree appeased by this preliminary step towards the recovery of his liberty, or whether his alliance with Charles convinced him of the impossibility of dissolving his union with Catharine, it appears, that he never explicitly avowed his determination,

till he had conceived a serious passion for Anne Boleyn.*

Originally it had formed no part of Henry's plan, to raise a private gentlewoman to the throne : and he had almost as strong an impediment to combat in his own pride, as in the constancy of his mistress ; but no sooner had love prevailed, than even pride conspired with native obstinacy to promote the interests of his passion ; and having once pledged his word, he resolved to hold it sacred, even though he should hazard by it the loss of his kingdom. To make this promise was easy ; but it required all the vehemence of the lover, all the inflexibility of the tyrant, to surmount the obstacles that opposed its fulfilment. Hitherto, indeed, the court of Rome had offered to princes a commodious relief for the evils of an ill-assorted marriage, since, in the complexity of the Ecclesiastical

* See Cavendish.

Canons, some pretext of consanguinity, or plausible irregularity, was easily discovered, for redressing the grievance. It imported little to the admission of such claims that they were founded in equity or truth. Within Henry's own existence, the Romish tribunal had authorised Louis the Twelfth of France, to repudiate a blameless wife, that he might espouse the heiress of Brittany. More recently, Henry's own sister, Margaret, had obtained a divorce from the Earl of Angus, on the plea of prior contract: she had since espoused Lord Stewart, and was again a suitor for the abrogation of her nuptial vows.

Unfortunately for Henry, the unimpeachable conduct of Catharine left him no alternative but to rest his plea on the canonical prohibition against marrying a brother's widow. More unfortunately still, that objection had been previously obviated by a papal bull of dispensation, especially granted for the marriage with Catharine,

and consequently he had no better resource than to impugn the authority of one Pope, at the very moment he was soliciting the assistance of another; a *strange solecism* in the Defender of the Faith, the avowed champion of the church against the heretical innovations of Luther! It was impossible that Henry should entirely close his eyes to the complicated difficulties and impediments of his undertaking; and even to Wolsey he appears not to have communicated the ultimate object of the enterprize, but to have confined himself to the question of divorce, without reference to Anne Boleyn. Whether the Cardinal was entirely the dupe of his artifice, must be left to conjecture. To gratify his sovereign, he frequently gave entertainments, at which the object of his affection was present *, and

* “The Cardinal espying the great zeal that the King had conceived in this gentlewoman, ordered himself to please as well the King as her; dissimulating the matter that lay hid in his breast, and prepared

where, alternately with her lute, her voice, and her exquisite grace, she exerted all her powers of fascination, and intoxicated his senses with delight. By his admiration, however ardent, the Cardinal was perhaps the less alarmed, from having previously witnessed similar attentions to Lady Tallbois; concluding that, as in that instance, a dishonourable intrigue was to terminate the connection. On some occasions, he had perhaps observed in Anne Boleyn an air of coquetry and levity, which impressed him with unjust suspicions of her real character; but Wolsey was not present during those more private interviews, when

great banquettes and high feastes to entertaine the King and her at his own house. And thus the world began to grow to wonderful inventions, not heard of before in this realme. Love betwixt the King and this gorgeous lady grewe to such perfection, that divers imaginations were imagined, whereof I leave here to speake." Cavendish's Life of Wolsey. See Wordsworth's Edition.

Henry saw his mistress in the bosom of her family, and when, having gladly escaped from the court at Eltham or Greenwich, he mounted his fleetest steed, and, accompanied by two or three confidential attendants, (among whom were Norris and Weston *,) rode towards Hever.

Tradition still points to the hill in front of the castle, where the well-known bugle announced the King's approach, and his impatience to be admitted to the beloved presence. At this welcome signal, the drawbridge lowered, the gates were thrown open, and Henry found all his constraint and trouble overpaid by a single glance exchanged with Anne Boleyn. In these happier moments, when, dismissing the tyrant and the sovereign, he was surprised sometimes into feelings of tenderness and benevolence, with what horror would he have recoiled from the awful visions of fu-

* Afterwards beheaded.

turity ! with what indignation rejected the prophecy, that he should hereafter destroy the woman whom he then adored, — that he should listen impatiently for the gun which was to murder her ! — that he should also look with eagerness for the fatal cry which was to assure him that his victim was dead !

* The story is tradition, that Richard III. got where he could hear the guns, and discern the black flag, that announced Anne Boleyn's execution.

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